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Councilman, audience member brawl at Hartford council meeting

By Elizabeth Ferszt
Contributing Writer

The May 18th meeting of the Hartford City Council didn't go as planned — on the agenda were several mundane items such as City Hall being closed for Memorial Day, Monday, May 25; a Notice to Mow ordinance; and reminders about Juneteenth celebrations, and the June 12-14 Strawberry Festival. But instead, an elected council member left his seat and went after a member of the public audience.

According to Wood TV-8, things got so bad that the City of Hartford Police have conflicted themselves out in terms of bringing charges against either Hartford City Commissioner Charlie Weeden, or Hartford resident John Spoula.

Because this was a regularly scheduled public meeting, video live feed had been set up, and recordings of the events show in part, Weeden, seated on the commissioners and mayor's dais, using his middle finger to gesture at Spoula. A voice, allegedly Spoula's, can be heard saying, "Ah, tough guy!?"

Weeden then says, "I'm gonna stay here and be as out of order as I want to be."

Spoula allegedly then says, "Come on, right now!"

According to the video, Weeden, wearing a red baseball cap and a white t-shirt, then suddenly gets up from his chair and walks behind the formal desks and dais. Spoula can be seen approaching the commissioners dais from the other side in the same clip. Ricky Ricks, Superintendent of Public Works, still wearing his yellow reflective work gear, attempts to block Weeden from reaching Spoula.

The fight escalates: Spoula takes a swing at Weeden; Weeden grabs Spoula's arm, and the two men, along with Ricks, fall into nearby folding chairs. Spoula grabs Weeden's collar as Hartford Chief of Police Brian Matthews (who regularly attends City Council meetings in his public capacity), grabs Spoula's arm and places it behind his back, arrest-style. Ricks guy pulls Weeden back from the fight, to break it up.

Matthews can be heard saying to Spoula, "Stop, you're arrested!"

According to Wood TV-8, the two men have been battling it out online for a while, with Spoula criticizing Weeden over his personal taxes, and then went after his family. Weeden said that Spoula said or posted, "Stand up, let's go."

Spoula confirmed the vitriol and tension between the two: "Me and Charlie want this fight. I want it. He wants it. We both want to go old school and finish it. OK? That's the way I was raised. That's the way he was raised," Spoula said.

After the incident in City Council chambers, Spoula said, "When he (Weeden) come running after me, well, of course I got up and I'm going to fight him. I'm not going to stand there and just let him club me," even though it appears from the video that Spoula threw the first punch.

Spoula on ground being arrested by Matthews; Ricks controls Weeden also pinned down.

Spoula is filing charges against Weeden for assault, and the two men were briefly detained by Hartford Police after the incident. But the county will be handling any formal charges against both men. Spoula is also spearheading a recall effort against Weeden as commissioner.

Hartford mayor Jane Danger called a meeting on Tuesday May 19 to discuss "alleged violation of the City's Code of Conduct & Ethics Ordinance by Commissioner Weeden," — as stated in the meeting's agenda website, but Danger said that the meeting "was unrelated to the incident" and that she "could not comment further due to possible litigation."

Van Buren County Sheriff, Hon. Daniel Abbott was contacted for comment but did not respond.

City of Hartford Superintendent of the Department of Public Works, Ricky Ricks was also contacted, but he did not respond.

Van Buren County Jail reported that neither Spoula nor Weeden had been taken into custody and/or released. Online sources report that no charges on either side will be filed.

Hamre guest speaks at Paw Paw ceremony

Paul Hamre was guest speaker at the Paw Paw Memorial Day Parade and ceremony at Maple City Veterans Park. Members of the Paw Paw High School Marching Band, the Paw Paw American Legion McGowan-Johnson Post 68, and Paw Paw Veterans of Foreign Wars, Wilson-Hall Post 2532, and others, participated in speaking, providing music and laying wreaths.
Courier-Leader photo/Paul Garrod

Ladies Auxiliary members pay tribute in Lawrence

Members of the Lawrence American Legion Hess-Eastman Post 174 Ladies Auxiliary are shown Monday night, May 25, at Hill Cemetery, during a luminary service that featured over 1,200 luminaries that were lit in honor of Lawrence area men and women who served in the armed forces
Courier-Leader photo/Paul Garrod

Over 1,200 luminaries lit at Lawrence Memorial Day night ceremony

On Memorial Day night, the community of Lawrence held a Memorial Day night luminary service that featured over 1,200 luminaries, with the name of a Lawrence service man or woman on each one, were lit at the conclusion of the service. What began 20 years ago by Charles Moden, Lawrence American Legion Hess-Eastman Post 174 Commander, and a host of volunteers, with over 750 luminaries, has now grown to over 1,200. Earlier in the day, the Village of Lawrence held a Memorial Day parade and service at the Lawrence Village Park, paying tribute to 22 servicemen who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Courier-Leader photo/Paul Garrod

High gas prices putting squeeze on drivers

By James Windell

When Jack filled up his tank a few days ago in his Chevrolet Traverse SUV, the bill was $85.48.

"Wow!" Jack exclaimed as he looked at the reading on the gas pump. "That's a lot of money!"

Jack can afford it, but he's not happy about the way gas has increased. He's also retired and he and his wife can choose whether he wants to take any trips.

"We were thinking about driving to Boston to see our daughter," he remarked, "but I think we will postpone that until the price of gas comes down.

Melanie, who drives 50 to 100 miles a day as part of her job, isn't happy either.

"Gas costs more than a dollar more than it did last year," she says. "I'm looking at ways I can economize in other areas in order to be able to afford the increase in gas. I get reimbursed for my mileage but that reimbursement doesn't go up when the cost of a gallon of gas increases."

With the average price of regular unleaded gasoline in Michigan bouncing back and forth between $4.70 and $4.99 per gallon, almost everyone is feeling the effects of the increased cost of gas.

Influencing the price you pay at the pump are the conflicts in the Middle East, including disruptions at the Strait of Hormuz. Increased crude oil costs tend to push gasoline prices higher.

There may be other factors driving up the cost of a gallon of gas, but many people may not care about what is driving

the cost up. They just worry about the effect on them as consumers or as someone responsible to stay within a budget.

Take Ana Aleman-Putman, the Superintendent of South Haven Schools, for instance. She's responsible for keeping a fleet of buses on the road every day during the school year. But she's more worried about what higher gas prices do to others.

"Higher gas prices worry me as they add extra financial stress to employees and families," Aleman-Putman says. "When gas goes up, it stresses our already tight budgets."

She adds that it's still too early to see the financial impact on the school budget if prices remain high.

She added though that there are on-going efforts to ensure that services to students are not affected.

The City of South Haven has many vehicles which provide services to the community. City Manager Kate Hosier says that the City doesn't track the cost to the City of higher gas prices. But she acknowledged that if prices remain high this could be a topic of conversation among City staff.

Adam DeBoer, Chief of the South Haven Police Department, said gas prices are not currently a concern for him and that "It probably worries the general public more."

"I want my team out in the field proactively rather than sitting in the office waiting for calls," DeBoer says. He added that so far no city department has discussed gas-price-related operational changes. "That would probably only be reconsidered if gas prices reached an extreme level."

He added that the price of gas at whatever amount is "Just the cost of doing business."

When Jennifer Sistrunk, the Executive Director of Visit South Haven, gave an annual report to the City Council recently, she remarked that higher gas prices might be a bonus for the tourism business.

"Most visitors coming to South Haven are in-state Michigan travelers," she said. "Gas prices may drive more people to stay in Michigan for their vacations."

And that means that when it costs roughly $70 to $80 to fill a standard 15-gallon tank, tourist dollars are more likely to be left in cities like South Have That's one silver lining in an otherwise dismal summer projection of continued high gas prices.

South Haven signals lifeguard readiness for beaches

By James Windell

At a training drill on South Haven's South Beach, the new lifeguards looked fit and ready to begin patrolling the beach on Memorial Day.

The media was invited to the training drill involving all eight lifeguards and Chief Lifeguard David Figueredo on Thursday, May 21, 2026. Figueredo led his lifeguard crew through various warmup exercises plus a short swim of about 50 yards out into Lake Michigan.

At a press conference prior to the training exercise, Figueredo, who is both Chief Lifeguard and Beach Safety Manager, said that he was "super excited to launch this on South Beach." He added that the lifeguards have been working very hard and training for two weeks in cold weather.

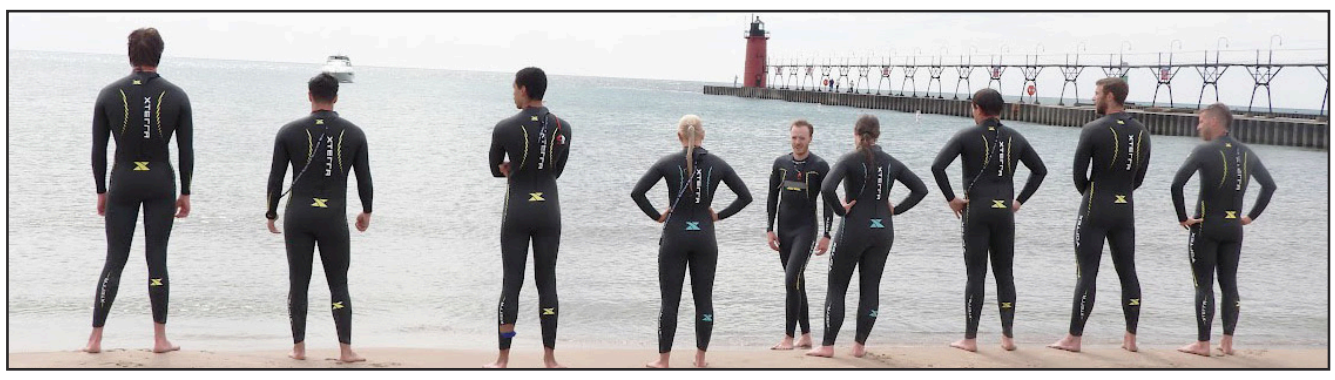
"We've really put them through the ringer, for lack of a better term, but they've come every day ready to go, with smiling faces and willing to learn," Figueredo said.

Responding to questions from the media, Figueredo said that the eight lifeguards were hired based on their qualifications, work experience, and maturity. "Then they have been going through our two-week intensive lifeguard academy, where we teach them the basics of water rescue, on land first aid, prevention, surveillance, and how to operate in treacherous surf environments, to make those rescues," he explained. "That's coupled with classroom sessions to teach them everything they need to know about being a surf lifeguard." He said that all of the lifeguards would be certified before going out on the beach.

Also answering questions from the media was South Haven Police Chief Adam DeBoer, who has been working closely with Figueredo.

"We're excited for our lifeguards to be out on the beach," DeBoer said. "We want people who come to South Beach to feel safe." He went on to say that "South Haven has always provided a very clean beach for people to enjoy, and I think being involved in the training, we have a good group of guards that are ready to hit the water."

A TV reporter asked DeBoer if he had any concerns that parents will now use the lifeguards as a sort of babysitter. DeBoer responded by saying: "I hope not. I think parents with children realize the responsibilities they have when they go to the beach. Obviously, our lifeguards will always



be vigilant to the people in the water, but they might go and say something to a parent if they see a parent not paying attention as well."

DeBoer said that the police department played a big role at South Beach in the past when there were no lifeguards. "Now with lifeguards and a beach enforcement team," he said, "the role for the police will change. If we have an emergency on the beach, [there will be a] handoff from our lifeguards to an ambulance, a fire crew or to the police department when that scene develops beyond their capabilities."

City Manager Kate Hosier led off the press conference by thanking Chief DeBoer and David Figueredo for their coordination in hiring and training lifeguards.

She was asked would makes South Haven different in terms of it needing lifeguards. "I think that South Haven is not unique to many lake shore communities who find themselves to be a very attractive tourist place for people to enjoy," she responded. "Unfortunately, when you have a lot of people who come to these areas, sometimes they do not know the conditions. They do not know what is at the beach. So, we've done a lot with signage to make sure that we're trying to let people know what's on the beach, but every lake shore community faces these kind of challenges."

She was also asked if having guards on the beach will make the City more liable if somebody does get injured in a swimming accident. "I think that any time you add more staff you are adding more liability," she said. "That's just the bottom line."

Hosier was asked about her message for families going into Memorial Day weekend. "I would say the message is please come enjoy our beaches," she replied. "If you prefer to stay at a guarded beach, South Beach is the guarded beach. The other northern beaches, North Beach, Woodman Beach, and Oak Street Beach are not guarded. So, if you prefer to be at a guarded beach, and we'd like you to be here, please stop by South Beach, and we hope that everyone has a very clean, very safe experience."

Figueredo said that his lifeguards are ready for both residents and visitors to South Beach. "There will always be a lifeguard on surveillance if someone's on the sand," he said. "So, people don't necessarily even have to be in the water for someone to be on watch, but we will be guarding from 11:00 am to 7:00 pm, seven days a week."

Museum kicks off summer season with Blessing of the Fleet

The summer season at the Michigan Maritime Museum in South Haven was launched Friday with the organization's annual fish fry, featuring the famous fried lake perch from Captain Lou's. The event began with the Blessing of the Fleet ceremony and the casting of flowers on the water, both century-old maritime traditions. The museum also debuted its new Harris Commercial Fishing Building, which highlights the history of the commercial fishing industry in South Haven and throughout Lake Michigan.

Photos by Tom Renner

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Paw Paw Service League makes donation to Paw Paw District Library

The Paw Paw District Library received a $1,000 donation from the Paw Paw Service League for the outdoor space currently under construction on the library grounds. "We are so grateful for their support!" said Paw Paw District Library Director Gretchen Evans, shown in photo at left, with Pat Peters, representing the Paw Paw Service League.

Photo courtesy/ Paw Paw District Library

Vietnam vet and Congressional Medal of Honor recipient welcomed to state Capitol

Senate Republican Leader Aric Nesbitt, R-Porter Township, on Thursday, May 21, welcomed U.S. Army Vietnam War veteran James "Doc" McCloughan to the state Capitol as his special guest for the Senate's annual Memorial Day Service honoring Michigan's fallen service members. McCloughan was presented with the Congressional Medal of Honor by President Donald Trump on July 31, 2017, in recognition of his heroic actions rescuing fellow soldiers during several combat engagements from May 13-15, 1969, despite his own wounds and the risk to his life. Read more about McCloughan's distinguished service on his Congressional Medal of Honor Society profile at: www.cmohs.org/recipients/james-c-mccloughan.

Lawrence Elementary students pay tribute to Lawrence area veterans

By Paul Garrod
Staff writer
news4garrod@gmail.com

LAWRENCE – Many Lawrence area veterans gathered Thursday, May 21, at the Lawrence Elementary gym to hear tributes in word and song by Lawrence Public Schools' students.

Following a welcome by Lawrence Jr-Sr. High Principal, Brock Thumm, the Lawrence High School Band played the National Anthem.

"In Flanders Field," by John McCrae, was then read by William San Juan-Gonzalez.

Members of the Lawrence National Elementary Honor Society then carried branch service flags in front of the veterans as a branch of service medley was played. Veterans were asked to stand when their branch song was played.

Student Grace Stone presented a "Thank you to Veterans."

Lawrene Public Schools' Superintendent Ryan Williamson then gave a short address to the veterans and students gathered.

"Memorial Day is a special holiday in the United States when we remember and honor the soldiers who died while serving in the military," said Williamson.

"It's a day to be thankful for the bravery and sacrifice of those who helped protect our country," he said.

Williamson continued, "Memorial Day is also a time when families get together, maybe have a picnic or attend a parade – but it's important to remember why we have this holiday."

He added, "It's not just a day off. It's a day to think about courage, sacrifice, gratitude, and appreciation."

He concluded, "So this Memorial Day, I hope you'll take a moment to pause and remember the heroes who helped make our country what it is today."

As the celebration ended, Wendy Murney, a retired Lawrence Elementary teacher gave a history of the song, "Taps," followed by the playing of "Taps" by Juan Roldan.

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Paw Paw robotics programs unite to celebrate student achievement

PAW PAW - Paw Paw Public Schools (PPPS) recently celebrated the accomplishments of all district robotics teams at the 2025–26 Robotics Banquet held Tuesday, May 12, at Paw Paw High School. Award-winning teams from Paw Paw Later Elementary, Paw Paw Middle School, and Paw Paw High School came together for a special group photo, showcasing how the PACK at PPPS is united in building success through innovation, teamwork, and community support.

Coaches, students, families, volunteers, and sponsors enjoyed a potluck dinner, team presentations, awards, robot demonstrations, and special recognition for Paw Paw High School's 2PawRobotics teams following their recent experience competing at the World Championship in Houston. From elementary through high school, PPPS students are learning by doing, developing creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and real-world problem-solving skills that help prepare them for future careers and success in an ever-changing world.

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A Connecticut Youth Comes of Age During Revolution

James Stevens' tombstone

Editor's Note:
The following story was written by Tom Funke about a Van Buren County Revolutionary War veteran buried in Colburn Cemetery, near Lawrence, in Arlington Township.

A Connecticut Youth Comes of Age During Revolution

James Stevens was born on 10 August 1757 in Glastonbury, Hartford County, Connecticut Colony, the son of Joseph and Jerusha (Stowe) Stevens. Raised in a colonial farming community, he came of age just as tensions with Britain reached a boiling point. Like many young men of his era, Stevens answered the call to arms as the Revolution broke out.

In February 1777, at age 19, Stevens enlisted for the duration of the conflict in the Continental Army. His service record - preserved through later pension applications - shows that he served in Captain Mill's Company of Colonel Baldwin's Artillery Artificers before transferring to a regiment commanded by Colonel Brewer. This service placed him in the heart of the Continental Army's operations throughout the latter half of the Revolutionary War.

Stevens's military career was active and geographically broad. Documents indicate he participated in key battles of the Northern theater, including the Battle of Monmouth, the Battle of Brandywine, the Battle of Germantown, the Battle of Trenton, and operations around White Plains. These engagements - some of the most brutal of the war - were fought under the overall command of General George Washington, and they helped shape the course of the struggle for independence.

The Continental Army during this period was a hard pressed force, often facing shortages of food, clothing, and supplies. Yet it was also a crucible for forging national identity, as soldiers like Stevens from different colonies fought side by side. The training, hardships, and camaraderie of this era helped bind the new nation together. General Washington's leadership was central to this effort — not always triumphant, but always steadfast in forging a unified army from disparate militia and continental forces.

Postwar Life and Family

After the war, Stevens returned to civilian life and married Honor Talcott on 8 December 1784 in Connecticut. Together they began a family that would eventually include eight children: James, Sally, John, Lucy, Horace, Clarissa, Jerusha, and Samuel. As with many Revolutionary War veterans, Stevens's transition from soldier to pioneer and family man was marked by movement and adaptation.

In 1807, Stevens moved his family from Connecticut to Lewis County, New York, undertaking the grueling journey by ox sled and horse. Settling near the village of Lowville, he and his family farmed and established roots in the frontier lands of upstate New York.

Yet another chapter awaited him in the 19th century as Americans pushed ever westward.

Pension and Michigan Settlement

By the 1820s, Stevens - like many aging veterans - sought formal recognition for his service. In 1819, he applied for a Revolutionary War pension, detailing his enlistment and years of service in the Continental Army. For his service, he was eventually granted a pension and 100 acres of bounty land, rewards offered by the young United States to compensate long serving soldiers.

Census records from 1840 list James Stevens, at age 83, living in Lawrence Township, Van Buren County, Michigan, as a pensioner for military service, evidence of his later life in the developing West.

A Town's Name and the Legacy of Service

Stevens's influence in his community extended beyond his military record. When settlers organized what would become Arlington Township, Van Buren County, Michigan, in 1842, it was Stevens — one of the oldest and most respected pioneers - who suggested the name. Vital records clearly indicate he was born in Glastonbury, Connecticut. He may have resided in Vermont or had significant ties there before moving to New York.

Arriving in Arlington Township at age 83, Stevens embodied the pioneer ethos: disciplined, industrious, and unafraid of hard work even in his later years. Neighbors recounted that he was a central figure during community gatherings, rich with stories of war and settlement, and that his presence lent historical gravitas to the formation of the new township.

Final Years and Commemoration

James Stevens died on 8 July 1846 at the age of 88. Markers placed by the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) list his death as July 8, 1847. He was buried in Colburn Cemetery, near Lawrence in Van Buren County, Michigan, where his gravestone still marks him as a "Soldier of the Revolution."

His second wife, Esther Stevens, survived him and continued to draw a widow's pension until she died in the 1850s. There was confusion to which James Stevens she was married to, as, the file associated with her application - File W8766 - belongs to a different James Stevens who served from Virginia and died in Kentucky. The pension files for our James Stevens - which have been digitized as case W6187 - include affidavits and details about Stevens's service that illuminate the life of an ordinary man swept up in extraordinary times. These records are invaluable primary sources that confirm his long service and post war recognition.

Historical Significance

James Stevens's story - while not one of well known generals or founders - is emblematic of the many thousands who fought for American independence and then built the new nation from its eastern settlements to the expanding frontier. His life intersects with several key themes in early American history:

•The transition from colonial subject to citizen soldier: Stevens's enlistment at a young age reflects how the Revolutionary War transformed ordinary colonists into actors in the creation of a new republic.

•Veteran migration and frontier settlement: Like many Revolutionary War veterans, Stevens moved westward after the war, participating in the settlement of lands that would become new states and communities.

•Community leadership and civic identity: His role in naming Arlington Township reflects how Revolutionary War veterans became pillars of emerging communities, lending their authority and experience to civic life.

•Memory and commemoration: The preservation of Stevens's gravestone and his inclusion in pension lists highlight how early Americans sought to remember their war dead and honor their service.

Conclusion

James Stevens's biography weaves together military service, family life, pioneer resilience, and community leadership. From Glastonbury to Van Buren County, his life was a microcosm of early America's transformation - a testament to the enduring impact of Revolutionary War veterans on the nation's growth and identity.

Funke has since found about 100 Revolutionary War veterans buried in Michigan.

William Dyckman, Revolutionary War Veteran, remembered on Memorial Day

"The grave of still another Revolutionary soldier has been discovered in Van Buren county, according to the Paw Paw Courier. His body lies in the old cemetery on north LaGrave street in Paw Paw, and the inscription on the monument that marks his resting place reads: "William Dyckman, a Soldier of the Revolution, Born December 9, 1761, Died September 6, 1846." Mr. Dyckman has not been forgotten by some of the older residents of Paw Paw who knew him during his life time, nor by the members of the G. A. R. Post, who have annually decorated his grave on Memorial day. The cemetery where he is buried is not well cared for, no burials have been made there for years, and the grave of Wm. Dyckman is nearly concealed by a growth of shrubs." -Hartford Day Spring, July 7, 1915

The following information was found in a search on the internet for William Dyckman, Jr.

When William Dyckman, Sr., and Mary Michael Tourneur following their family up to Cortlandtown, NY, in 1776, William Dyckman, Jr., was nearly 14, - too young to join the militia or to serve with his older brothers in the Westchester Guides. A year later, close to his 15th birthday, he was living in Orange County on the other side of the Hudson, where his uncle, Henry Tourneur, was a captain in the Orange County militia.

From his pension application, made 40 years later when the government decided to pay a pension to those who had served during the Revolution, Dyckman was patrolling the river in October of that year, He had enlisted in his uncle's militia company, stationed north of Haverstraw at Stony Point. It was about this time that British troops landed and headed north to attack Forts Clinton and Montgomery.

In the spring of 1778, Dyckman volunteered again and served one week out of every four until winter came. The three months' service he claimed were disallowed by a clerk in the pension office with the dismissive comment "too young" written in the margin of his application. At age 16, on December 9, 1778, he became eligible for military service and was a militiaman again in his uncle's militia company, patrolling one week in every four.

The following year marked the beginning of the Mohawk Valley campaign, and he enlisted at what is now Clarkstown for three months in Captain Jonathan Lawrence's militia company. He marched with his company to Albany and then west along the Mohawk River. His three months were up before he saw any action, but he volunteered to remain "at the solicitation of his officers." In a brief engagement at Fort Plain, near Canajoharie, some enemy troops were captured, and he was chosen to guard them on the march down the Hudson Valley.

William Dyckman, Paw Paw Revolutionary War veteran

Dyckman original tombstone

Discharged at Poughkeepsie after four months' service, he returned to Orange County and rejoined his uncle's militia company, serving for two months in 1781 and one month in 1782.

Although he had itemized 13 months of service on his application, the pension office credited him with only 9-1/2 months. He received an annual pension of $31.66.

William Dyckman, Jr., returned to New York City with his father and married Maria Smith in 1786 at the city's Dutch Reformed Church. Their first daughter was baptized at the Tarrytown Old Dutch Church. Their next two children were baptized in the city at the Dutch Reformed Church. The next child was baptized in the Greenbush Dutch Reformed Church, near Albany.

Most Dyckmans tended to remain in the Hudson Valley, but William Dyckman, Jr., suffered from a strong wanderlust. In 1802, the family relocated from Greenbush to New York's Onondaga County and lived at several locations there until 1834. The next move was to the state of Michigan.

This Dyckman family traveled overland in three covered wagons to Buffalo, where horses, wagons and Dyckmans were loaded on a ship. They disembarked at Detroit and resumed the overland journey to the town of Paw Paw. William Dyckman, Jr., died in Michigan in 1846, a year after his wife's death. They are both buried in Old Town Cemetery in Paw Paw. One of his sons, Evert Brown Dyckman, became prosperous in Paw Paw and built a hotel, the Dyckman House, still operating there on East Michigan Avenue.

"Unearth a Story" summer reading at VBDL Lawrence Community Branch Library

LAWRENCE – The Summer Reading Kick-off Party at Van Buren District Library (VBDL) Lawrence Community Branch will be held on Saturday, June 6, from 11a.m. to 3 p.m. From 11 a.m. to 1p.m., a Read-a-Thon will be held with guests, including the Lawrence Township Emergency Services, and retired Lawrence teachers Pete Alburtus and Sherrie Alburtus. Slime and Scales with Sarett Nature Center will be held from 2 to 3 p.m.

Register for the Summer Reading Program and view the grand prizes.

Hours for the Lawrence Community Branch Library, 212 N. Paw Paw St. Lawrence, are Monday through Wednesday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Thursday and Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

For information about this or any other program, call (269) 674-3200.

Van Buren District Library is headquartered in Decatur with branches in Bangor, Bloomingdale, Covert, Decatur, Gobles, Lawrence and Mattawan.

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125 5th Graders enjoy Trail Education Days

By James Windell

When 125 fifth graders hit the Kal-Haven Trail on May 22, 2026, they learned about the trail's history and a whole lot more.

Visiting nine stations along the trail, students also learned about pollinators, poison ivy, insects, compass navigation, water safety, the Black River Watershed, planting, wildlife, and outdoor recreation.

That, says Visit South Haven's Trenton Bulat, Digital Media Manager, is what Trail Education Day is all about. "It's about connecting students with the backyard we all share, fostering appreciation for nature, and inspiring the next generation of stewards to care for the trails and outdoor spaces that make our community, and our great state Pure Michigan," Bulat says.

An annual event put on by Visit South Haven, Trail Education Day is one of the ways the Visitors Bureau gives back to the community while helping local students connect with the trails, waterways, plants, wildlife, and outdoor spaces that make South Haven so special. It's also one of the programs that helped South Haven become one of the first designated Trail Towns in Michigan through Pure Michigan.

According to Kendra Kingsbury, Guest Relations & Community Liaison for Visit South Haven, five groups of 25 students were picked up from school, dropped at the trail access point, walked 1.6 miles back to the trailhead, rotated through stations, learning something new at each one.

The nine educational stations along the trail and at the Trailhead included a bald eagle, an owl, pansies, skateboards, pollinators, water safety, a trolley ride, trail history, Black River Watershed history, compasses navigation, and plant and bug identification. "It also included lots of laughter and a whole community showing up for kids," adds Kingsbury.

Bulat said that Visit South Haven thanks every partner, presenter, volunteer, and supporter who helped make the day possible. That list includes Friends of the Kal-Haven Trail, South Haven Garden Club, Barden's Farm Markets for donating pansies, South Haven City Councilmember (and local beekeeper) Dave Flack, Truth Skate Church, Michigan Avian Experience, Mayor Annie Brown, the South Haven Area Chamber of Commerce, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Chief Lifeguard David Figueredo, photographer Tom Renner, Destination Paw Paw, Kal-Haven Outpost, and Kitchen 527 for keeping everyone fueled up with a great lunch.

"The kids were engaged and the volunteers were amazing," notes Kingsbury. "The weather was perfect. It was a great day on the trail. I'm still nerding out that we got to see a Bald Eagle that close to us! That was a highlight for me."

Tickets on sale for 29th annual Cottage Walk

Tickets are on sale for the 29th annual Cottage Walk to be held Saturday, June 27.

Co-sponsored by SHOUT for South Haven and the Scott Club, the event will feature tours of four unique cottages, concluding with a tour of the historic Scott Club.

"This year's featured lineup is an eclectic array of residences unique to our community," said spokesperson Patti Sheppard. "Participants who are longtime residents of South Haven especially will have an opportunity to take a step back in time with a visit to a converted neighborhood school. There will also be an opportunity to experience the accents of a 19th century-style Italianate villa, visit a uniquely constructed modular home and enjoy the features of a newly built home. Topping it off with a visit to the Michigan Historic Site Scott Club will make for a memorable afternoon."

The Scott Club building is a stately Queen Anne style structure of sandstone capped by a cupola of carved oak. Two historic windows of Austrian stained glass are featured on the second floor. The recent installation of an elevator in the building has enhanced to tour the building barrier-free.

Event attendees visit the cottages at their leisure from 12-5 p.m. Volunteers at each cottage will provide an historical perspective of the site. Tours of the Scott Club will run from 3:30-5 p.m.

Tickets are $20 person. The advanced purchase of tickets is encouraged as a capacity sale is anticipated.

Tickets are on sale during normal business thru June 26th at the South Haven Chamber of Commerce, 606 Phillips St., and the South Haven Visitors Bureau, 546 Phoenix St. They will also be sold on the morning of the Cottage Walk at the Farmers Market in downtown Dyckman Park.

SHOUT for South Haven in 2025 invited the Scott Club to partner in the Cottage Walk as a means of bringing to the community's attention two active civic-minded organizations.

"Our continued partnership with the Scott Club is most fitting as both organizations strive to make a great community even greater," said SHOUT President Robert Copping."

"Partnering with SHOUT has strengthened our fundraising and is making a positive impact in these times of rising costs," said Scott Club President Carol Anderson Kunze. "Proceeds from this year's Cottage Walk will be used in support of our mission to provide arts and cultural programming in our Michigan Historic Site."

The planning committee for this year's Cottage Walk is Robert Copping, Carol Anderson Kunze, Anna Krajecki, Patti Sheppard, Renee Kaplan and Tom Renner.

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VIEWPOINT

Rules to live by

MIKE'S MUSINGS

MIKE WILCOX
PUBLISHER

I often seek out thought provoking words of wisdom on the internet. Just last week I came across this (by anonymous) and thought I would share it with you. It might not mean much to those that are in their 20's or still have children at home, but for those of us that are considered in our twilight years it hits home. Here it is:

So… this is the beginning of the final stretch.

And slowly, the truths I had avoided all my life began to surface.

Kids? They're busy writing their own story.

Health? Slips away faster than sand through open fingers.

The government? Just headlines, promises and numbers that rarely change your daily reality.

Aging doesn't hurt your body first- it hurts your illusions.

So, I rebuilt my life with new rules- here they are:

Money is more reliable than anything else. Love your kids, but don't make them your retirement plan. Save for yourself. Financial independence is dignity. It allows you to afford a comfortable life if and when you no longer work. A life free of financial worry.

Your health is paramount. Nothing else matters if your body refuses to cooperate. Move, walk, stretch. Don't take health for granted. Guard your sleep like treasure. Eat cleaner. Reduce the poison disguised as sugar or salt.

Create your own joy. Waiting for others to make you happy is the fastest way to heartbreak. So, you learn to enjoy the small things- a peaceful breakfast, a good book, and music that warms the soul. When you know how to make yourself happy, loneliness loses its power.

Aging is not an excuse to become helpless. Some people turn aging into a performance of complaints. And slowly friends begin to slip away. No one wants to hear it. Strength is attractive. Resilience is magnetic. People respect the ones who stay capable, not the ones who surrender.

Let go of the past. The good old days were beautiful- yes. But they're gone and there is no return ticket. Clinging to the past, steals the present. Life today may look different, but it holds moments worth living. And think of the future as bright. You still have a lot of memories to make.

Protect your peace like it's your property. Not every argument needs your voice. Not every insult needs your response. Most of the time keeping quiet is the best choice. Peace is expensive. Protect it from dramas, negativity and draining people.

Keep learning something- anything. The day you stop learning is the day you start aging. A new recipe, a new word, a new app or a new hobby- your brain needs movement just like your body. Learning keeps you young; stagnation makes you old.

Strength and freedom still belong to you. Aging is an exam no can take from you. You can adapt, rebuild and rise stronger…or sit back, and wait for someone to rescue you. The choice is yours. I know what I choose. Do You?

Sheriff's Report- Wanted felon arrested now faces multiple new felony charges

"Our Narcotic detectives received information on the location of a wanted felon in possession of a handgun. Detectives were able to locate him in a vehicle he was a passenger in and conducted a traffic stop on it for a traffic violation in Waverly Township," said Van Buren County Sheriff Daniel Abbott. The suspect was arrested on his warrants and was found to be in possession of a loaded 9mm handgun. Another passenger had multiple warrants, and they were arrested as well. "The initial felon they were looking for now faces multiple new felony charges," said Sheriff Abbott.

Van Buren County Central Dispatch took 7,384 phone calls in April, putting the total at 30,525 for the year. Van Buren County Sheriff's Office Uniform Response handled 736 calls for service in April, putting the total for the year at 2,875. Uniform Response made 415 traffic stops in April, putting the total number of stops for the year at 1,423.

Dispatch Director Mike Hostetler is attending the Michigan Public Safety Telecommunications Conference this week in Muskegon. "They go over a lot of information to aide dispatchers and directors do their job at a professional level," said Sheriff Abbott.

"Our office is participating in "Click it or Ticket Campaign" running through June 2. Deputies will be focusing on no seat belt use but will also be stopping vehicles for other violations as well," said Sheriff Abbott.

"Our office assisted with the USAT National Event in Geneva Township. It was a four-day event which was a national qualifier. It was a huge turnout having 908 individual athletes from four countries: USA, Canada, Mexico, and Macedonia. 47 states and the District of Columbia all had participants. The only states not represented were Alaska, Wyoming, and North Dakota. Our office's mounted division, uniform response division, reserve division, and emergency management division were all involved. The event organizers are covering all our costs we had to work the event; thus, zero county tax dollars were used," said Sheriff Abbott.

Uniform Response handled a single vehicle motorcycle crash in Columbia Township. A passerby drove up on a motorcycle that had left the roadway and crashed. "The passerby found the female driver face down with life threatening injuries and called 911 immediately. Aero Med was unable to fly so the driver was transported priority one to the trauma unit by the ambulance. Speed appears to be the cause entering into a curve too fast," said Sheriff Abbott.

"I received a text Saturday night in reference to a subject with a major bond violation. Uniform Response was given the information, confirmed that he was indeed of the major violation, located the suspect, and placed him into custody. He now faces additional charges for the violation," said Sheriff Abbott.

Uniform Response assisted with a house fire in Bloomingdale Township. Shortly after the call came in, a report of a naked male came in running around on the road and in nearby fields. "Deputies located the individual and chased him on foot as well as with a canine. The individual was taken into custody on outstanding warrants,:" said Sheriff Abbott. A Fire Marshall is investigating the cause of the fire. The male was one of the residents of the house that was on fire. Once the investigation is complete, it'll be sent to the Van Buren County Prosecutor's Office for review on charges.

Uniform Response handled a BOL for a possible drunk driver in Waverly Township. Deputies located the vehicle stopped in the travel lane on M-43 highway that had almost hit the caller head on. "Deputies made contact with the driver, and it was obvious due to his actions and smell of intoxicants he had been drinking. Dexterities were performed, a PBT was administered, then he was placed under arrest. While being handcuffed, he became resistant and started fighting with Deputies. Before it was done, the sergeant was headbutted, and a deputy sustained abrasions and cuts to his elbows, knee, and hand. The deputie's pants were also torn during the resistance. The driver now faces numerous additional charges," said Sheriff Abbott.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Housing package will not make housing more affordable

Dear Editor,

Michigan residents should pay very close attention to the so-called "Housing Readiness" package moving through Lansing: HB 5529–5532 and HB 5581–5585. These bills are being sold as a solution to housing affordability, but nowhere is there a guarantee they will effectively make housing more affordable.

Instead, this proposal is crystal clear in its intent: to pack tiny houses on tiny lots between existing single-family homes connected to public utilities—all while stripping away local control and weakening the rights of residents to challenge zoning changes in their own neighborhoods.

Under these bills, municipalities would be forced to allow 500-square-foot homes on 1,500-square-foot lots, only 5 feet away from neighboring property lines, with a setback of only 15 feet. Duplexes will be allowed in single-family neighborhoods, mobile homes in residential zones, and accessory dwelling units on private property. Protest petition rights would become far more difficult to exercise, and local governments would face automatic approval deadlines that limit meaningful public review.

Supporters claim more supply automatically equals affordability. But Michigan families already know that is not how today's housing market works. Even tiny homes can become overpriced in bidding wars fueled by investors and speculation. "More units" does not translate into affordable homeownership for young families or first-time homebuyers.

At the same time, these bills could place enormous strain on roads, sewer systems, schools, emergency services, and local infrastructure – especially in smaller communities that were not designed for this level of density.

What should concern Michiganders even more is who is backing these bills. Citizens should be cautious about blindly trusting endorsements on these bills simply because they come from like-minded organizations or politicians. Principles that fundamentally protect property rights and values, preserve local governance, and ensure citizens maintain a meaningful voice in decisions that affect their own communities must be honored above builder profit margins.

One of the most frustrating arguments being used to defend these housing bills is the claim that "government shouldn't tell people what they can do with their property." Some organizations and elected officials that have long branded themselves as defenders of local control, constitutional government, and working-class values are now supporting legislation that centralizes zoning power, weakens citizen oversight, and overrides local decision-making. Voters, take notice!

While some of these arguments sound principled on the surface, if government truly has no role in regulating property use, then why do zoning laws exist at all? Why have setback requirements, environmental protections, septic regulations, noise ordinances, burn bans, occupancy limits, or industrial restrictions in residential neighborhoods? Most people understand there must be reasonable standards because one property owner's decisions can directly impact surrounding property owners and the broader community.

Americans have traditionally held the belief that the people closest to a community are best equipped to govern it. Local zoning is, in many ways, one of the purest forms of self-government. Yet these bills move authority away from local residents and toward state mandates and development interests. Residents elect local officials, attend planning meetings, and participate in decisions about how their communities develop. Replacing that process with broad statewide mandates does not expand liberty for homeowners; it weakens the ability of communities to govern themselves.

One of the core American principles at stake is the idea of taxation without representation – the understanding that the governing authority to which you are required to pay taxes should represent you meaningfully. When local zoning authority is overridden by broad state mandates, property owners will still be paying the taxes that fund roads, schools, police, fire services, and infrastructure, but they lose practical control over the development decisions that directly affect the cost and strain of those systems. If housing density is increased without local oversight and consent, the financial burden of expanded infrastructure still falls on existing taxpayers, even when they had little or no ability to influence or object to those changes. In that sense, the concern is not just about housing policy, but about preserving the basic expectation that taxation and local decision-making should remain connected to genuine representation.

Property rights are not just about what a developer wants to build on one parcel. They also include the rights of neighboring homeowners who invested in a community with certain expectations about density, traffic, infrastructure, and neighborhood character. True property rights require balance and local accountability – not top-down mandates that primarily benefit large development interests while limiting the ability of residents to object.

Housing affordability is a real issue, but surrendering local control and fundamentally changing neighborhoods without any assurance of lower housing costs is not a solution homeowners throughout the state should be willing to accept. They should take action and tell their legislators to vote NO on HB 5529–5532 and HB 5581–5585.

— Concerned Michigan Taxpayer

Sarah Berry, Mattawan

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Sistrunk reports on Visit South Haven- number of visitors declines

By James Windell

Jennifer Sistrunk addressed the South Haven City Council to give her annual report and review some of the annual travel and tourism numbers.

Speaking to the City Council on Monday, May 18, 2026, Sistrunk, Executive Director of Visit South Haven, said that Visit South Haven, formerly the South Haven Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, was founded in 1987. Now, as Visit South Haven, it is the destination marketing organization for Van Buren County and Casco Township. It also operates Destination Paw Paw.

Sistrunk noted Visit South Haven has a "small but mighty" team of four people, which includes herself as Executive Director, Kendra Kingsbury, who handles community liaison and guest relations, Trenton Bulat, who is digital media manager, and Janice Chittle, who is destination experience manager and leads Paw Paw marketing.

Funding for Visit South Haven comes from a 5% lodging assessment paid by participating lodging members. "Visit South Haven is 100% visitor-funded and uses no local tax dollars," Sistrunk told the City Council. She added that while visitors pay a 6% sales tax, the 5% Visit South Haven assessment is collected from overnight stays.

"Short-term rentals do pay the assessment if the owner/manager has more than 10 transient facilities," she said, "and nine vacation rental management companies are members."

Discussing Visit South Haven's work, Sistrunk said that the work spans traditional, digital and paid marketing services, visitor services, and media/PR services. Visit South Haven recently hosted the National Travel and Tourism Press Conference at the Michigan Maritime Museum. Their work, she went on to say, is framed in three pillars: marketing, destination development, and data/research. "Since 2019, more dollars have been shifted into destination development (e.g., Dyckman Park restroom upgrades, accessibility beach wheelchairs, trails/ parks, and grant matching)," she said.

The organization is planning to develop the empty lot on the corner of Phoenix and Broadway soon, but they are examining how they can avoid competing with private business and instead fill unmet community needs.

Sistrunk said they are continually trying to gather visitor insights and put together key data trends. They use Placer.ai to understand visitor demographics and behaviors for decision-making. Sharing a snapshot of the profile of South Haven visitors. She said the median age is about 5; the average household size is about 2.5 people; visitors have a bachelor's degree or higher; and most visitors are female. She also said that a majority of visitors to the City are in-state Michigan travelers.

She added that factors driving visitors to the area include gas prices and a preference to avoid flying. In recent years, the trend has been slightly fewer Chicago visitors and more visitors from Michigan's east side, including metro Detroit metro.

Reporting on annual visitation frequency, she said that about 1.6 million visitors came to the City in 2025. However, there has been a multi-year decline and repeat travel visits have dropped significantly over the past two years. She reported that there has been about a 30% drop in tourists – suggesting fewer repeat trips. "If South Haven's decline continues, a model scenario shows it could fall below one million visitors in 10 years," she said.

Sistrunk concluded her presentation by stating that her team is still working to identify causes of declining repeat travel by comparing other lake shore markets and broader industry patterns. It is evident, she indicated, that people are traveling less often, but spending more intentionally on fewer trips.

OBITUARIES

Robert L. Etzwiler

Robert L. Etzwiler, 85, of Gobles, passed away on Monday, May 18, 2026. He was born March 25, 1941, in Mansfield, Ohio.

He is survived by his wife of 30 years, Pearl Etzwiler, whose resolute marriage served as an inspiration for their family. He is also survived by his children, their spouses, his grandchildren, and 13 great-grandchildren: Kevin Etzwiler (wife Connie & daughter Brianna), John Etzwiler, David Mead, Daniel Mead, Denise Noble (husband Alex & their children Katy, Nicholas, Alexander, Iris), and William Noble (wife Debra & their children Logan, Liam, Spencer, Samuel).

Robert was a proud Vietnam Veteran, executing two combat tours during the war, including the 1968 Tet Offensive. He was drafted into the United States Army in 1966 and re-enlisted twice. Robert served his country as a Light Weapons Infantryman and an Asphalt-Heaterman. He was especially proud to be assigned to the 'Big Red One' and 'American's

First Team', the Army's 1st Infantry and 1st Cavalry Division respectively. He finished his service at the rank of Sergeant, a true frontline leader. For his service and sustained heroism, Robert received many military honors, including the U.S. Army Air Medal, Purple Heart, Combat Infantryman Badge, and the Vietnam Service Medal with Bronze Service Star.

Following his service with the Army, Robert was a long-time member of the Kal-Haven Lions Club and the 1st Cavalry Division Association. He enjoyed gardening, thrift shopping, Western & Military films, and spending time with his family.

Services to honor Robert's life will be held on Friday, May 29, 2026. The public viewing will take place at the D.L. Miller Funeral Home in Bloomingdale, starting at 10:00 a.m. The funeral service will begin at 11:00 a.m. A luncheon will follow at the Gobles Methodist Church. In lieu of flowers, please send donations to the Kal-Haven Lions Club or Vietnam Veterans of America.

Robert L. Etzwiler's legacy is one of sacrifice, both for the Army and his family. Resilience during the Vietnam War, his charity work on the homefront, and his devotion to family will keep him in our hearts forever. There is a common expression in the 1st Cavalry Division, one uttered as conflicts and the years roll on: "Once CAV, Always CAV". Arrangements entrusted to D.L. Miller Funeral Home, Bloomingdale Chapel.

John (Jack) Klimach

John (Jack) Klimach passed away peacefully at his home on May 15, 2026. Jack was born March 12, 1946, to Herman and Ethel Klimach in Paw Paw, Michigan, where he resided his entire 80 years of life. Jack spent the last 46 years beside his soulmate Debra Klimach, who preceded him in death this past January.

Jack was a fan of oldies music and loved to play the drums and/or keyboard himself. He also enjoyed sharing his love for the drums by teaching his children and grandchildren how to play as well. Jack enjoyed tinkering in his garage, working in his yard and having a good Sunday chicken dinner. What Jack enjoyed most were his children and grandchildren, more so his grandchildren! Over the years he enjoyed with his grandchildren the many sleepovers, wrestling matches, New Year's Eve parties and early morning breakfasts spent with them and Debra having fun, laughing and just goofing off.

Jack is survived by three sisters, Clara Wright, Marie Durbin and Shirley Downs; his children, Kevin Klimach, Shawna Gates, Tristan Wilke; eighth grandchildren, and two great- grandchildren.

Per Jacks wishes, cremation has taken place and a private family memorial at a later to be determined date will be held at Austin Cemetery, where he will be put to rest beside his beloved wife.

If so desired, friends are encouraged to leave condolences for the family online at: www.adamspawpaw.com.

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Covert hold Memorial Day ceremony

Van Buren County Commissioner Gale Patterson-Gladney, Covert Township Supervisor Daywi Cook, Veterans LeRoy Morris, and Van Buren County Register of Deeds, Paul DeYoung, all took part in the Covert Memorial Day ceremony, held Monday at the Covert Cemetery. Morris, who was the keynote speaker, is a longtime Covert resident, family businessman, blueberry grower and farmer. DeYoung and Patterson-Gladney spoke about Henry Shepherd. Photos courtesy/Paul DeYoung

Campbell wins four events at the USA National Multisport Championships

By James Windell

South Haven athlete Jay Campbell didn't have to travel far for the 2026 USA Triathlon Multisport National Championships Festival. Just three miles east on Phoenix Street for the five-day celebration of multisport, hosted at Lake Arvesta Farms and organized by Tris4Health.

Campbell, who is ranked number one in the U.S. for his age group, expected that since winning a national triathlon event in Milwaukee in 2023, that he might win three of the five events he entered.

But what was unexpected was that he would end up in first place in four of the grueling events.

"This is my fourth year in a five-year age group," Campbell said after winning the Draft-Legal Super Sprint Triathlon on Sunday, May 17, 2026, "so there is always the threat of a 'youngster' entering the group." Campbell is currently in the 70 -74 age bracket group.

Then again, registering in seven events wasn't the best way of ensuring he would win. "Because I was entering so many events," Campbell noted, "there is always the fatigue factor and racing against fresh competition."

Besides finishing first in the Draft-Legal Super Sprint Triathlon (a very short triathlon with 250 meters of swimming, 6 km of biking, and 1 to 2 km of running), he also won the Super Sprint Slide Triathlon, the Super Sprint Time Trial and the Draft-Legal Super Sprint Time Trial (in which athletes ride in packs and draft on the bike, making strategy, positioning, and speed far more important than in standard non draft races).

Campbell has made a significant mark in the triathlon community, winning the 2025 Barron Lake Triathlon in Niles, Michigan, and previously earning the title of three-time national champion. This distinction places him among the elite age-group triathletes in the U.S.

Coached by Dawn Hinz, a South Haven triathlon athlete herself, Campbell won three national championships in Dallas, Texas, in 2023. He has retained his Number One ranking as a duathlete and triathlete.

How does Jay Campbell explain his endurance in a tough sport?

"There is no single factor that has led to my longevity in the sport," Campbell says. "It is many little things: time in the pool; time on the cycling trainer in the basement; running in the snow; proper nutrition; good sleep; strength training; and race strategies." In addition, he thinks his coach and his supportive wife, Mary Hosley, also are keys to his success.

Dawn Hinz, who has been his coach for a few years, explains his success, especially this past weekend, differently. "Jay raced well because he's an experienced athlete who is well trained and listens to his body in training and on race day."

Despite winning national championships, Campell doesn't think he is all that unusual or fast.

"I don't want anyone to think I am under the delusion that I am fast," he says. "I may even be painful to watch. But I am proof – and so are many other older athletes – that triathlon is a sport that you can enjoy in your later years."

Hinz named to state leadership position

By James Windell

Brandon Hinz, Executive Director of South Haven Area Emergency Services (SHAES), was recently sworn in as the Region 5 Representative for the Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs (MAFC).

The honor for Hinz came during the MAFC Leadership Symposium held May 13 and 14, 2026 in Bay City.

"I'm honored by the opportunity to serve in this role," Hinz said after returning from the Leadership Symposium. "For me, it's really about being part of the conversation and helping represent the unique challenges departments like ours face."

Hinz noted that there are very few fire-based EMS transport agencies like SHAES on the west side of Michigan serving large rural areas and multiple communities. "It's important those perspectives have a voice at the state level," he said. "I'm looking forward to learning from others, sharing our experiences, and bringing back ideas that strengthen the service we provide locally."

The symposium brought together fire service leaders from across Michigan to collaborate on leadership development, emerging operational challenges, training strategies, department readiness, and the future of emergency response.

Serving as a Regional Representative provides an opportunity to strengthen collaboration among departments, advocate for regional needs, and help ensure that communities like South Haven continue to benefit from strong partnerships across the fire and EMS service.

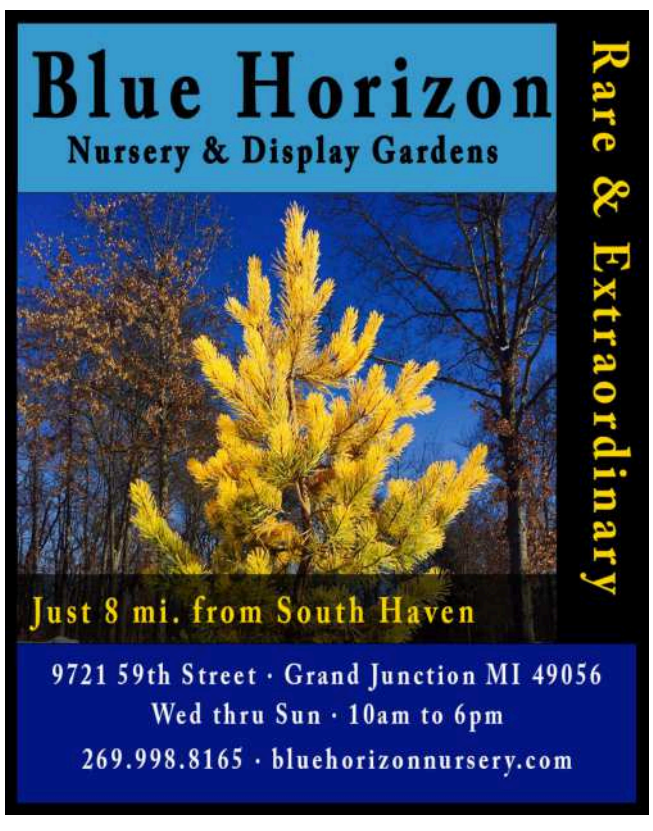
Hinz joined the SHAES staff in 1999. A lifelong resident of the South Haven community, he started as a paid-on-call responder and since 2005 has been a fulltime firefighter/paramedic. In 2012 he was presented with the department's Leadership Award. He was named executive director/chief in 2020. Hinz lives in Geneva Township with his wife Dawn and sons Jake and Cal.

SHAES serves the city of South Haven and townships of Casco, Geneva and South Haven with fire and advance life support ambulance service from three stations. The department consists of 22 career staff and 29 paid-on-call members.

"South Haven Area Emergency Services is grateful for the opportunity to have representation at the regional level and looks forward to continuing to bring ideas, partnerships, and best practices back to serve our communities," said Hinz.

Hinz was asked what this honor says about the role SHAES plays in the state association. "I think it reflects SHAES' willingness to stay involved and be part of the larger conversation about the future of fire and EMS," he said in response.

"We serve multiple communities through a fire authority model, and I firmly believe there is value in departments working together and pooling resources to provide strong service in a sustainable way. If our experiences can help shape those discussions, that's something we're proud to contribute."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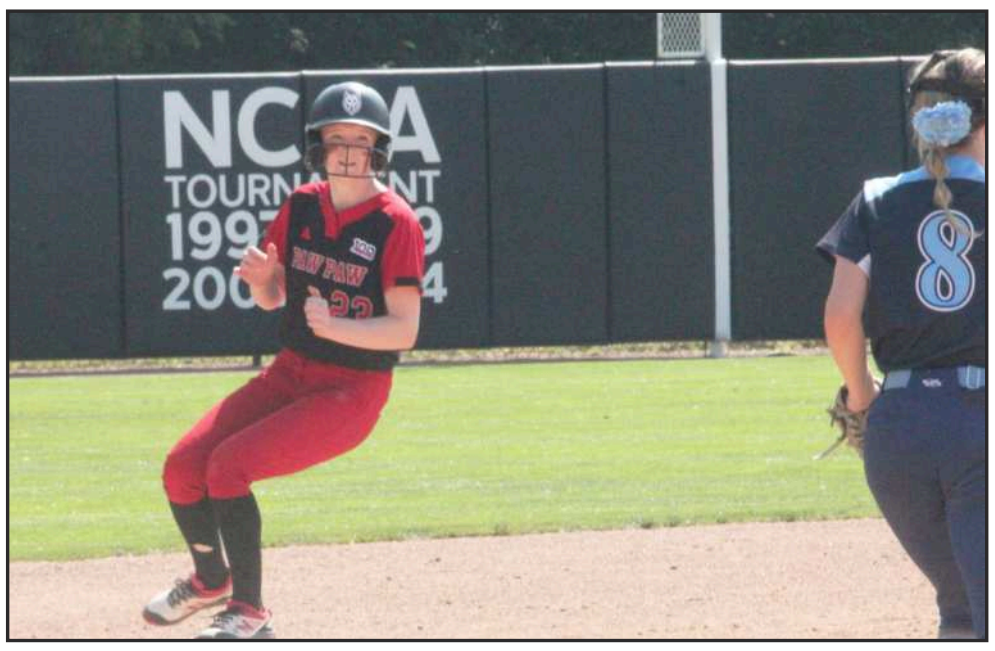
Paw Paw girls cross 30-win mark



Stella Shearer had four hits in the Wolves' first game.

By John Raffel
Correspondent

PAW PAW — Paw Paw's softball team improved its record to 31-4 on May 29 with 16-6 and 15-4 wins over South Haven.

Stella Shearer had four hits in the Wolves' first game. She tripled in the first inning and had three singles the rest of the way.

The Wolves got two runs in the second on RBI singles by Julie Wiley and Raegan Hahn. They regained the lead in the bottom of the third on RBI doubles by Charlotte Harling and Bella Clemons and an RBI single by Stella Shearer. They had five runs on five hits in the fifth. Megan Miller had an RBI single.

Clemons was the winning pitcher. She allowed eight hits and six runs (one earned) over six innings, striking out six and walking two.

Elizabeth had four hits including a double, to lead the Wolves in the second game.

Kourtney Nichols was the winning pitcher, allowing four runs and nine hits striking out two and walking one. Lauren MacKellar tossed one inning.

Paw Paw was slated to play at Granville on May 26 for a doubleheader. Wolves are defending state runners-up and play at the Otsego district against Plainwell on May 30 at noon.

Lawton baseball sweeps Bloomingdale

By John Raffel
Correspondent

LAWTON — Lawton's softball team improved to 12-14 with a sweep over Bloomingdale 15-0 and 14-3 on May 22.

Lawton exploded for nine runs in the second inning of the first game. Payton Beam got the win for Lawton, allowing there hits and zero runs, striking out three and walking one. Allison Murphy pitched one inning of scoreless ball for Lawton.

Aubri Conkin earned the win for Lawton in the second game. She allowed two hits and three turns, two earned, over five innings, striking out seven and walking two.

The Blue Devils had 10 hits. Payton Potter and Kinsley Smith had three hits apiece for the winners. Allison Murphy and Kaidence Beam stole multiple bases. Potter had an inside the park home run.

Lawton is hosting the districts this week and was slated to only Parchment in a first-round game on May 26

Lawton lost a double header to Cassopolis 6-5 and 9-5 on May 21.

Beam was the losing pitcher for Lawton, striking out seven batters and walking none in seven innings. Murphy had a hit and two RBIs.

Conklin had two hits and Smith two RBIs for the Devils.

Lawton baseball at 8-11

By John Raffel
Correspondent

LAWTON — Lawton's baseball team came into this week at 8-11.

Lawton was scheduled to play at Decatur on Tuesday, May 26 and will face Schoolcraft on May 30 at noon in a semi-final district game.

A recent highlight for Lawton was a 2-1 win over Allegan and 8-1 victory over Holland Black River on May 16.

The Blue Devils have gone 6-4 in their last 10 games.

Ben Hall earned the pitching win against Allegan. He gave up three nits and one run over five innings, striking out two and walking three.

AJ Terry and Hall had one hit apiece for Lawton. Hall had one RBI.

In the win over Black River, Warren Page began the contest for Lawton, allowing two hits and one run over five innings, striking out eight and walking three. Warren Page and Carter Chisholm had two hits apiece for Lawton and Chisholm had two RBIs.

Logan Clark has been an effective pitcher and first baseman for Lawton.

Hall has a 0.508 on-base percentage and a 0.627 slugging percentage this season. Hall leads Lawton Varsity Blue Devils with 37 and one-third innings pitched. His ERA is 2.25.

Bloomingdale track girls place eighth

By John Raffel
Correspondent

BLOOMINGDALE — Bloomingdale's girls track team placed eighth while the boys were ninth at the Southwest 10 Conference meet on May 19 at Comstock.

Bngor girls were sixth and the boys seventh.

For the Bloomingdale girls, Kylie King won the 100 meter hurdles in 18.97 seconds. Linda Pittsley was ninth in the 300 meters (30.58) and ninth in the 100 meters (14.77).

For the Bloomingdale boys, Jose Ramos was second in the long jump and fifth in the 200 meters (24.530, James Odell was third in the 300-meter hurdles (47.17) and third in the pole vault (10-6).

For Bangor boys, Landen Valentine won the 110-meter hurdles (16.730 and the 300-meter hurdles (43.76), He also won the pole vault (11-0).

For the Bangor girls, Sariah Laosteie was fourth in the 1,600 meters (6:34.90); Kathryn Anderson was second in the 100-meter hurdles (18.99) and third in the 300 hurdles (59:12). Lauryn Anderson was second in the discus (110-0).

Bangor takes two from Stockbridge

By John Raffel
Correspondent

BANGOR — On Friday, Bangor ended its regular season at the University of Olivet against the Stockbridge Panthers.

"Game 1 was a defensive battle," Bangor coach Nick Cox said. "We opened it up by scoring 3 runs in the fourth inning, going on to win 4-1. Game 2, our bats woke up when Luke Remington hit a bases clearing triple, scoring 3 in the top of the 2nd. We eventually won the game 12-0."

Bangor was set to be back on the field Tuesday (May 26) in Bloomingdale vs. Fennville in the MHSAA pre-district game.

In Game 1, Jaret McCoy pitched 6 innings, giving up 2 hits, 1 earned run and striking out 12. Wyatt Schneider got the save.

In Game 2. Terrance Payne went the distance, allowing 3 hits, 0 earned runs and striking out 8.

On May 20, "we traveled to White Pigeon for our final SW10 matchup," Cox said. "We ended up losing both games, 16-1 and 8-5. Friday we will finish up the regular season as we travel to the University of Olivet to take on Stockbridge."

South Haven girls lose pair

By John Raffel
Correspondent

SOUTH HAVEN — South Haven's softball team is 23-9 after losing 16-6 and 14-4 to Paw Paw on May 20.

In the first game, Addison Dekoning took the loss for the Rams. She went for innings surrendering 11 runs on 16 hits, striking out one and walking two.

Raegan Hahn, Hadley Spencer and Kiersten Chalupa all collected two hits for South Haven. Hahn, Julia Wiley, Chalupa and Addison Dekong had RBIs.

Sofia Grieves took the loss for South Haven in the second game. She went 5.1 innings, giving up 14 runs and 22 hits. Hadley Spencer and Kiersten Dahlia had one RBI apiece.

The South Haven baseball team is 22-10-1 after splitting with Holland on May 22. Holland won the first game 6-5 and South Haven took the rematch 2-1.

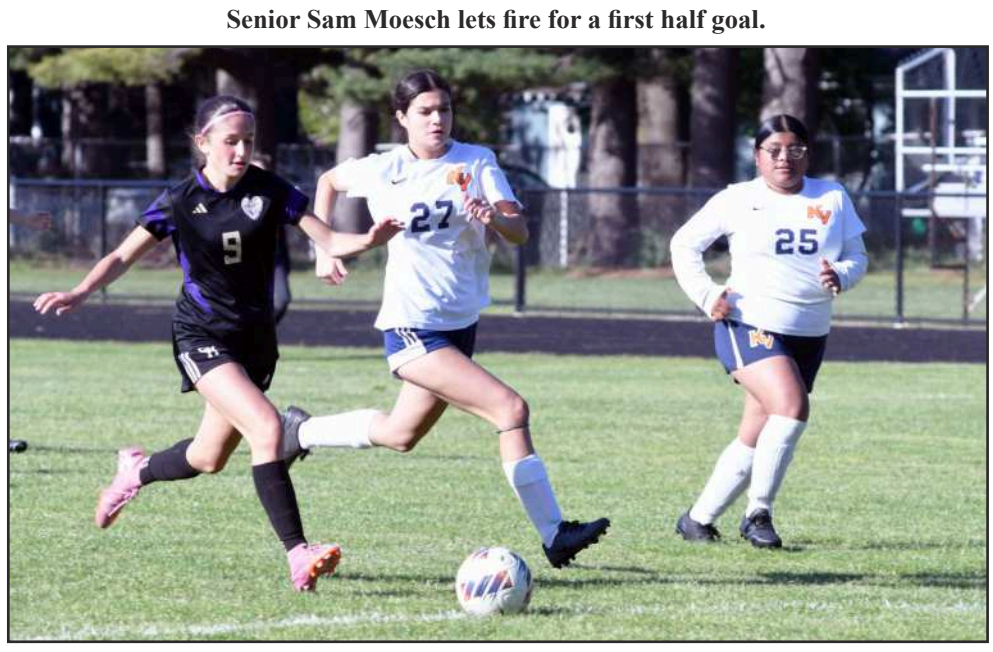
In the first game for South Haven, Isaac Chalupa had three hits. Quin Hayes was the losing pitcher.

In the second game, Chaua started and recorded 15 outs. Hayes had an RBI double and Grayson Knox a sacrifice fly.

South Haven kickers advance to semis

South Haven opened MHSAA Girls Soccer tournament action with an 8-0 victory over Wyoming Kelloggsville. The win advances the Lady Rams to the semi-finals of the District tournament which they will host at Ratcliffe Field this week. South Haven has a 10-8-2 season record.

Senior Sam Moesch lets fire for a first half goal.



Freshman Hailey Strasser races past her opponent enroute to scoring a first half goal.

Sophomore Ana Barajas takes aim enroute to score a first half goal.

Lawrence track athletes excel in league finals

Carolina Mancera added a third-place finish in discus.

By John Raffel
Correspondent

LAWRENCE — Lawrence's track and field teams closed out the Southwest 10 Conference Finals with four All-Conference Honorable Mention performances and several additional top-eight finishes.

Mariana Vinaja earned honorable mention in the 800 meters with a fourth-place finish, while Aurora McQueen placed third in the 3200. In the field events, Carolina Mancera added a third-place finish in discus. The girls 4×400 relay team of Leslie Patlan, Lucy Patlan, Kacey Reyes, and Zoey Soppelsa also earned honorable nention by taking third.

Lawrence added several more top-eight finishes across the lineup. On the boys' side, Xavier Glover placed fifth in the 800 meters, Alexander Gardner finished sixth in shot put and fifth in discus, and Gio Barrientos took sixth in long jump.

For the girls, Zoey Soppelsa placed eighth in the 400, Kacey Reyes finished fifth in the 800, and Aurora McQueen added a seventh-place finish in the 1600. Alex Strauch placed fifth in the 300 hurdles and seventh in long jump, while Mancera added an eighth-place finish in shot put.

Several athletes also recorded personal bests at the meet. Boys personal bests came from Carter Spicher in the 800 meters and Logan Tunstill in discus. Girls PBs were earned by Lucy Patlan in the 200, Leslie Patlan in the 400, Aurora McQueen in the 3200, Alex Strauch in the 300 hurdles, and Mancera in shot put.

Mattawan baseball wins 26th game

By John Raffel
Correspondent

MATTAWAN — Mattawan's baseball team improved to 26-9-2 with an 8-7 win over Grand Blanc on May 23.

The game was tied 7-7 in the bottom of the seventh when Liam Walsh singled, scoring a run and ending the game.

Coleton Strong had a double down the left field line for a 3-0 Matawan lead in the second. Grand Blanc scored six runs in the fifth for a 6-4 lead which included a grand slam home by Cooper Latrell.

Mattawan rallied back to take the win.

Kaiden Jominy earned the pitching win. He gave up one hit and one run, striking out two and walking none.

Mattawan had 15 hits. Strong had two RBIs and two hits while Walsh, Brady Mickelson, Ethan Puma, Patrick Doherty, Hominy and Sting also had two hits.

Mattawan was set to play Kalamazoo Loy Norris on May 26.

Free Fun Fest returns to South Haven on June 6

By James Windell

What's there to do in South Haven for families with children that are both free and fun?

That was a question from a mother of four young children last year. The question led to the first Free Fun Fest in the parking lot of the South Haven Yacht Club.

The hastily pulled together Free Fun Fest drew nearly 600 people. Which told Ruth Wiser, one of the organizers of that event, that they were on to something.

This year's Free Fun Fest will take place on Saturday, June 6, 2026, on the grounds of the Michigan Maritime Museum.

"It's very exciting that we have the Michigan Maritime Museum taking it over this year," Wiser says. "This has allowed us to continue to grow and to get more sponsors."

According to Wiser, this year's sponsors for the Free Fun Fest include more than four dozen local businesses and organizations, including the City of South Haven, Visit South Haven, Destination Paw Paw, the South Haven Fire Department, the South Haven Police Department, South Haven Public Schools, the Rotary Club, the Moose Lodge, the Elks, the American Legion, and the Michigan Maritime Museum.

"It's been an amazing number of people who want to become involved this year," Wiser says.

As a result, the event will continue to be free with food for as little as $1.00. The Free Fun Fest is described as a high-energy, waterfront celebration filled with hands-on activities, live demonstrations, and family fun. Everyone who attends can explore emergency vehicles up close, test their skills on a ninja obstacle course, enjoy robotics demonstrations, and participate in hands-on learning stations celebrating Great Lakes history and science.

Inside the Museum, exhibits will be open for exploration, while outside, the waterfront becomes a vibrant hub of activity. There will be limited free boat rides offering a rare chance to get out on the water; dockside tours of the historic tall ship Friends Good Will; more than a dozen carnival-style game booths including Shootin' Hoops, Sailor Knots, Games of Chance, Disc Golf, and more. In addition, there will be a library book giveaway and interactive learning challenges. And complimentary ice cream and root beer for guests.

The 2nd annual Free Fun Fest will take place on Saturday, June 6, from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Michigan Maritime Museum, 260 Dyckman Avenue, South Haven. There will be free shuttle rides from Dyckman Park in downtown South Haven to the Museum.

Wiser says that raffle tickets and food will be cash only.

For more information, visit MichiganMaritimeMuseum.org or follow along on social media for event updates.

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COLUMBIA TOWNSHIP, VAN BUREN COUNTY NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND FILING OF SPECIAL ASSESSMENT ROLL NORTH LAKE SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT NO. 1

TAKE NOTICE that the Township Board of Columbia Township, Van Buren County, Michigan, has determined to undertake improvements for the eradiation or control of aquatic weeds and plants in North Lake ("the Improvements"), located within a special assessment district tentatively designated as the North Lake Special Assessment District No. 1 (the "District"), pursuant to Act 188 of the Public Acts of Michigan of 1954, as amended.

The estimated total cost of the Improvements for the period of 2027 through 2036 is $95,000. The Township Board will consider specially assessing that cost against each of the parcels in the District in the manner set forth in the special assessment roll. The proposed special assessment roll identifies which parcels are to be assessed and the amount of the assessment, and it and is available for public inspection at Township Hall during the Township's normal business hours. Additional property will not be added to the district, and the cost will not increase by more than 10%, without further notice and a public hearing. The parcels in the District are as follows:

PARCEL NUMBER	OWNERS NAME	ASSESSMENT AMOUNT (Per Year)
The District will remain in existence from 2027 through the end of 2036 following confirmation of the special assessment roll.		
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80-06-016-070-00	HUTSNER BRADLEY S	$ 950.00
80-06-016-053-15	WALKER JEFFREY T & ANNE E	$ 950.00
80-06-016-053-20	SHERMAN BRENT & JANETTE	$ 950.00
80-06-016-053-30	FITZI MARK A & ANNETTE M	$ 950.00
80-06-016-053-35	SELF KENNETH & MARCY	$ 950.00
80-06-016-054-07	OLSEN JAY M & EILEEN M	$ 950.00
80-06-016-054-21	KUT PAWEL	$ 950.00
80-06-016-054-25	MCLAUGHLIN DANIEL J & GAIL D	$ 950.00
80-06-016-054-45	RUEDEL RICHARD R	$ 950.00
80-06-017-016-01	PETTORINI MICHAEL	$ 950.00
80-06-017-016-10	PETTORINI MICHAEL & OBRIEN KATHLEE	$ 950.00
80-06-017-022-21	NEFF ALAN H	$ 950.00
80-06-017-022-25	WENDORF JOHN NR E	$ 950.00
80-06-310-003-00	NICHOLSON CHRISTOPHER & LAUREL	$ 950.00
80-06-310-004-00	MARTIN GRACE M	$ 950.00
80-06-310-005-00	DELMAN-JANCEK ELIZABETH	$ 950.00
80-06-310-006-00	STACHURA MARTA TRUSTEE	$ 950.00
80-06-310-007-10	ANNABLE SCOTT D	$ 950.00
80-06-016-055-00	ADAMS RICHARD	$ 950.00
80-06-016-056-00	BROWN BUD	$ 950.00
80-06-016-058-01	ROBERTSON JEROMY J & KIMBERLY A	$ 950.00
80-06-016-062-00	KUEBLER NICOLE	$ 950.00
80-06-016-063-06	WRIGHT THOMAS L TRUSTEE	$ 950.00
80-06-016-048-00	MUNCH STEFAN & ANJA	$ 950.00
80-06-016-046-20	CRICHTON TIMOTHY SCOTT & TERA LYNNE	$ 950.00
80-06-016-051-00	AGREL A JOHN G & ANITA TRUST	$ 950.00
80-06-016-052-10	AGREL A JOHN G & ANITA TRUST	$ 950.00
80-06-016-054-30	BOREK ROBERT & LUCY	$ 950.00
80-06-016-054-36	MURPHY DANIEL J & COLLEEN	$ 950.00
80-06-016-054-40	DEMSKI CHRISTINE	$ 950.00
80-06-017-014-00	MANNO VINCENT	$ 950.00
80-06-017-017-00	HAHN JAMES & DEBORAH A	$ 950.00
80-06-017-018-00	EAGLE JOHN	$ 950.00
80-06-017-018-10	CHASE LEO W & ROSETTA E	$ 950.00
80-06-017-019-01	THOMPSON ELBERT D & ELAINE H	$ 950.00
80-06-017-022-30	CLEMONS DAVID & ROBERTA L	$ 950.00
80-06-017-023-00	KUBIC J WALTER & JOLANTA	$ 950.00
80-06-017-024-00	IRWIN STEVEN & TERESE	$ 950.00
80-06-017-026-00	AGREL A JOHN G & ANITA TRUST	$ 950.00
80-06-017-027-02	MCKIBBIN JEFFREY & KELLY LYNN	$ 950.00
80-06-310-001-00	HINCKLE DEBORAH	$ 950.00
80-06-310-002-00	SARGENT WASHINGTON & PEARL	$ 950.00

The Township Board will hold a public hearing on JUNE 16, 2026, at 6:30 p.m., at the Columbia Township Hall, 53053 County Road 388, Grand Junction, Michigan 49056, to review the special assessment roll and consider any objections to the special assessment roll.

Important Notice: An owner or party in interest in lot or parcel of land subject to a special assessment may file a written appeal of the special assessment with the Michigan Tax Tribunal within **30 days** after the date of confirmation of the special assessment roll **only if** the owner or party in interest objects to the special assessment at this public hearing (or in writing before the public hearing). An appearance may be made by an owner or party in interest (or his or her agent) in person or, in the alternative, an appearance or protest can be filed with the Township by letter before the hearing, in which case a personal appearance at the hearing is not required.

This Notice was authorized by the Township Board of Columbia Township.

Kara Hartmann, Township Clerk

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=• PUBLIC NOTICE •=

STATE OF MICHIGAN
COUNTY OF VAN BUREN
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate
Estate of FRANK MATTHEW HOSH, DECEASED
Date of Birth: May 2, 1936
TO ALL CREDITORS:
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, FRANK MATTHEW HOSH, who lived at 205 Miller Court Apt. 202, Paw Paw, MI 49079, died on June 19, 2025.
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Steven F. Golden, Personal Representative of the Estate of FRANK MATTEW HOSH, VAN BUREN COUNTY FILE #: 2025-1204-DE, within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.
Personal Representative:
Steven F. Golden
8912 McKinley Dr.
Barrington, IL 60010
Attorney:
Oliver S. Howell (P81470)
Howell Parfet Schau
350 East Michigan Ave.,
Ste. 500
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007
www.kzoolawfirm.com
(269) 382-5300
Court Address:
Van Buren Probate Court
212 E. Paw Paw St., Ste. 220
Paw Paw, MI 49079

Notice to Creditors
Estate of Karen A. Allen Date of Birth: January 27, 1948 TO ALL CREDITORS:
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Karen A. Allen, of 26724 Rosemary Lane, Lawton, 49605, Van Buren County, Michigan died August 8, 2025.
Creditors of Karen A. Allen are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to: Dennis E. Allen, Trustee of the Allen Protection Trust, u/a/d August 14, 2024, care of Carrier Law, P.C., 4965 East Beltline Avenue NE, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49525 within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.
May 22, 2026
Attorney
David L. Carrier P41531
4965 East Beltline Avenue NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49525
(616) 361-8400
Trustee
Dennis E. Allen
26724 Rosemary Lane
Lawton, MI 49065

State of Michigan
Probate Court
County of Van Buren
Publication of Notice of Hearing
File No. 2026-1082-DE
In the matter of George Lantie Cole
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS INCLUDING: Patrica Cole (Katowich), Keith Cole (Katowich), Timothy Cole (Katowich) whose address(es) is/are unknown and whose interest in the matter may be barred or affected by the following:
TAKE NOTICE: A hearing will be held on 06/17/2026 at 2:30pm at Probate Court, Courtroom #3 before Judge Susan Metzger #P62867 for the following purpose:
Petition for Probate and/or Appointment of Personal Representative.
05/11/2026
Petitioner:
Michael E. Moore
60901 M-40 South
Paw Paw, MI 49079
269-4152011

TO ALL CREDITORS:
Paul Soto, beneficiary of The Paul Soto Revocable Trust dated April 13, 2023, date of birth July 9, 1932, who lived at 21986 CR 681, Bangor, MI 49013, died January 30, 2026.
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against The Paul Soto Revocable Trust dated April 13, 2023, will be forever barred unless presented to Laura Marie Soto-Spoula, Trustee, within four months after the date of the publication.
Notice is further given that the Trust will thereafter be assigned and distributed to the person(s) entitled to it.
Trustee's Attorne:
Jennifer A. Smith, Esq.P81727
Q Elderlaw, PLC
1125 E. Milham Avenue
Portage, MI 49002
Trustee:
Laura Marie Soto-Spoula
21741 CR 681
Bangor, MI 49013

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Gregory J. Giniel II; Atty: Orlans; 1st Pub: 5/28/2026; Atty File #: 26-004985; Insurer: (unknown)
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM on JULY 2, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
Default has been made in the conditions of a mortgage made by Gregory J. Giniel II, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for OCMBC, Inc., its successors and assigns, Mortgagee, dated October 17, 2022 and recorded November 1, 2022 in Liber 4812, Page 644 Van Buren County Records, Michigan. Said mortgage is now held by Brighthouse Life Insurance Company, by assignment. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of One Million Two Hundred Sixty-One Thousand Five Hundred Eighty-Three and 1/100 Dollars ($1,261,583.01).
Under the power of sale contained in said mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public vendue at the place of holding the circuit court within Van Buren County, Michigan at 1:00 PM on JULY 2, 2026.
Said premises are located in the Township of Casco, Van Buren County Michigan, and are described as:
Lot(s) 13, 14, 15 and 16, Block 5, Plat of Beverly Beach, according to the recorded plat thereof, as recorded in Liber 5 of Plats, Page 1.
7258 Beverly Drive, South Haven, Michigan 49090
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA §600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale.
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period. FinCEN reporting will be required of all successful purchasers, absent a lawful exemption.
Dated: May 28, 2026
File No. 26-004985
Firm Name: Orlans Law Group PLLC
Firm Address: 1650 West Big Beaver Road, Troy MI 48084
Firm Phone Number: (248) 502.1400
(05-28)(06-18)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: ERIN MAPES; Atty: ROBERTSON ANSCHUTZ SCHNEID CRANE - RAS CRANE & PARTNERS (CC ON FILE); 1st Pub: 5/28/2026; Atty File #: 26-408893; Insurer: (unknown)
ROBERTSON, ANSCHUTZ, SCHNEID, CRANE & PARTNERS, PLLC, MAY BE DEEMED A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT. ANY INFORMATION WE OBTAIN WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. PLEASE CONTACT OUR OFFICE AT 13010 Morris Road, Suite 450, Alpharetta, GA 30004 ph:470-321-7112
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public vendue at the place of holding the circuit court in VAN BUREN County, starting promptly at 1:00P.M on June 25, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information: Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): ERIN MAPES. Default has been made in the conditions of a Mortgage made by ERIN MAPES to CHEMICAL BANK, original Mortgagee, for a mortgage dated June 28, 2007, and recorded on July 06, 2007, in Liber 1486 Page 193 in the Van Buren County Register of Deeds. Said mortgage was assigned through mesne assignments to U.S. BANK TRUST NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, NOT IN ITS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY BUT SOLELY AS OWNER TRUSTEE FOR RCAF ACQUISITION TRUST, as documented by an assignment dated February 18, 2026, and recorded on April 6, 2026, in Liber 1790 Page 928 in the VAN BUREN County Register of Deeds, on which Mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of $59,960.17. Under the power of sale contained in said Mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said Mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public venue, at the place of holding the Circuit Court within VAN BUREN County, Michigan on June 25, 2026 at 1:00 P.M. Said premises are located in the city of PAW PAW in VAN BUREN County, Michigan and are described as: THE NORTH HALF OF LOT 11, BLOCK 26, ORIGINAL PLAT OF THE VILLAGE OF PAW PAW, ACCORDING TO THE RECORDED PLAT THEREOF AS RECORDED IN THE OFFICE OF THE REGISTER OF DEEDS FOR VAN BUREN COUNTY. Property Address: 320 E BERRIEN STREET, PAW PAW, MI 49079 Tax ID No. 80-47-126-011-00 The redemption period shall be Six (6) months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale. If this property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. U.S. BANK TRUST NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, NOT IN ITS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY BUT SOLELY AS OWNER TRUSTEE FOR RCAF ACQUISITION TRUST, Mortgagee/Assignee May 28, 2026 ROBERTSON, ANSCHUTZ, SCHNEID, CRANE & PARTNERS, PLLC Attorney for Mortgagee/Assignee 13010 Morris Road, Suite 450 Alpharetta, GA 30004 Telephone: 470-321-7112 Facsimile: 404-393-1425 Service Email: MIFCLTeam@raslg.com
(05-28)(06-18)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Chad Bedwell; Atty: Potestivo & Associates - Potestivo & Associates; 1st Pub: 5/28/2026; Atty File #: 322076; Insurer: FNMA
Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the Circuit Court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 01:00 PM, on June 25, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Chad Bedwell, Surviving Spouse
Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Green Lending, its successors and assigns
Foreclosing Assignee: PHH Asset Services, LLC Date of Mortgage: July 31, 2025 Date of Mortgage Recording: August 6, 2025 Amount claimed due on mortgage on the date of notice: $155,709.79 Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in the City of Hartford, Van Buren County, Michigan, and are described as: LOT 16 OF PARASCANDOLO ADDITION NO. 1, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN LIBER 5 OF PLATS, ON PAGE 16, VAN BUREN COUNTY RECORDS.
Commonly Known as: 117 Paras Hill Dr., Hartford, MI 49057 The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale, or upon the expiration of the notice required by MCL 600.3241a(c), whichever is later; or unless MCL 600.3240(16) applies. If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, under MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention Purchaser: This sale may be rescinded by the foreclosing mortgagee for any reason. In that event, your damages, if any, shall be limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at sale, plus interest, and the purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee, or the Mortgagee's attorney.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. This notice is from a debt collector. Date of notice: 05/28/2026 Potestivo & Associates, P.C. 251 Diversion Street, Rochester, MI 48307 248-853-4400 322076
(05-28)(06-18)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Barbara Lynn Rokos; Atty: Team H; 1st Pub: 5/14/2026; Atty File #: 521906F02; Insurer: (unknown)
Important mainly because it was sent directly to you
Click to teach Gmail this conversation is not important
Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on June 18, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Barbara Lynn Rokos, a single woman
Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Village Capital & Investment, LLC
Date of Mortgage: October 26, 2020
Date of Mortgage Recording: October 30, 2020
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $50,976.11
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Hartford, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: Part of the Southeast 1/4 of Section 34, Town 3 South, Range 16 West, Hartford Township, Van
Buren County, Michigan, described as beginning at the East 1/4 post of said Section 34, thence S 00 degrees 05 minutes 25 seconds W, along the East line of said Section, 1014.42 feet to the point of beginning of the land herein described, thence continuing S 00 degrees 05 minutes 25 seconds W, along the said East line, 300 feet to the South line of the Northeast 1/4 of said Southeast 1/4, thence N 89 degrees 45 minutes 00 seconds W, along said South line, 300 feet, thence North 00 degrees 05 minutes 25 seconds E, parallel with the East line of said Section, 300 feet, thence S 89 degrees 45 minutes 00 seconds E, parallel with the South line of the northeast 1/4 of said Southeast 1/4 300 feet to the place of beginning.
Common street address (if any): 70858 62nd St, Hartford, MI 49057-8659
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: May 14, 2026
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1593393
(05-14)(06-04)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Lisa Hoag; Atty: Team H; 1st Pub: 5/7/2026; Atty File #: 511869F05; Insurer: (unknown)
Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on June 11, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Lisa Hoag, a single woman
Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): PennyMac Loan Services LLC
Date of Mortgage: March 29, 2019
Date of Mortgage Recording: April 4, 2019
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $95,388.15
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Almena, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: THE SOUTH 160 FEET OF THE WEST 680.6 FEET OF THE NORTH 1/2 OF THE SOUTHWEST FRACTIONAL 1/4 OF SECTION 7, TOWN 2 SOUTH, RANGE 13 WEST, ACCORDING TO THE GOVERNMENT SURVEY THEREOF.
Common street address (if any): 30777 M 40, Paw Paw, MI 49079-8520
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: May 7, 2026
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1592703
(05-07)(05-28)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Steven Koenig; Atty: Team X; 1st Pub: 5/7/2026; Atty File #: 529469F01; Insurer: (unknown)
Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on June 4, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Steven P. Koenig, aka Steven Koenig, a single man
Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, as Trustee for the benefit of the Freddie Mac Seasoned Credit Risk Transfer Trust, Series 2021-3
Date of Mortgage: June 1, 2004
Date of Mortgage Recording: June 9, 2004
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $13,604.33
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Porter, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: Commencing at a point found by starting at the Northwest corner of Section 28, Town 4 South, Range 13 West, thence Easterly on the Section line 99 rods, thence South parallel with the West line of said Section 2814 feet, thence South 33 degrees 48 minutes West 356 feet to the point of beginning of this description, thence continuing South 33 degrees 48 minutes West 60 feet, thence South 52 degrees 0 minutes East to Cedar Lake, thence Northeasterly along said Lake to a point which is South 51 degrees 52 minutes East from said point of beginning, thence North 51 degrees 52 minutes West to said point of beginning. Also, a non-exclusive easement for ingress and egress in common with others beginning at a point found by commencing at the Northwest corner of Section 28, Town 4 South, Range 13 West; thence Easter on the North line of said Section, 99 rods; thence South parallel with the West line of said Section, 2814 feet to the point of beginning of this description; thence South 33 degrees 48 minutes West 536 feet; thence North 52 degrees 34 minutes West 33.07 feet; thence North 33 degrees 48 minutes East 464.57 feet; thence North parallel with the West line of said Section to the centerline of Shaw Road; thence Easterly along said centerline to a point 99 rods Easterly on the West line of said Section 28; thence South to said point of beginning.
Common street address (if any): 29383 Shaw Rd, Lawton, MI 49065-9449
The redemption period shall be 1 year from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a.
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: May 7, 2026
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1592416
(05-07)(05-28)

Correction to Pub -> County: Van Buren; Mtgr: LARRY J SMITH; Atty: ROBERTSON ANSCHUTZ SCHNEID CRANE - RAS CRANE & PARTNERS (CC ON FILE); 1st Pub: 5/7/2026; Atty File #: 26-387556; Insurer: (unknown)
ROBERTSON, ANSCHUTZ, SCHNEID, CRANE & PARTNERS, PLLC, MAY BE DEEMED A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT. ANY INFORMATION WE OBTAIN WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. PLEASE CONTACT OUR OFFICE AT 13010 Morris Road, Suite 450, Alpharetta, GA 30004 ph:470-321-7112
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in VAN BUREN County, starting promptly at 1:00 P.M on June 4, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information: Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): LARRY J SMITH AND JACQUELINE SMITH. Default has been made in the conditions of a Mortgage made by LARRY J. SMITH AND JACQUELINE SMITH to FIRST FRANKLIN A DIVISION OF NAT. CITY BANK OF IN, original Mortgagee, for a mortgage dated March 09, 2005, and recorded on March 24, 2005, in Liber 1434 Page 142 in the Van Buren County Register of Deeds. Said mortgage was assigned by said Mortgagee to WELLS FARGO BANK, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, AS TRUSTEE FOR FIRST FRANKLIN MORTGAGE LOAN TRUST, MORTGAGE LOAN ASSET-BACKED CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2005-FF6, as documented by an assignment dated March 17, 2026, and recorded on March 30, 2026, in Liber 1790 Page 481 in the VAN BUREN County Register of Deeds, on which Mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of $58,549.01. Under the power of sale contained in said Mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said Mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public venue, at the place of holding the Circuit Court within VAN BUREN County, Michigan on June 4, 2026 at 1:00 P.M Said premises are located in the city of BLOOMINGDALE in VAN BUREN County, Michigan and are described as: THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBED PREMISES SITUATED IN THE TOWNSHIP OF BLOOMINGDALE, VAN BUREN COUNTY, AND THE STATE OF MICHIGAN: BEGINNING AT THE WEST QUARTER POST OF SECTION 7, T1S, R14W, THENCE SOUTH 89°43'57" EAST ON THE EAST AND WEST QUARTER LINE, 300.00 FEET, THENCE SOUTH PARALLEL WITH THE WEST SECTION LINE, 132.00 FEET; THENCE NORTH 89°43'57" WEST 300.00 FEET TO THE WEST SECTION LINE; THENCE NORTH ON SAME 132.00 FEET TO THE PLACE OF BEGINNING. Property Address: 5967 46TH ST., BLOOMINGDALE, MI 49026 Tax ID No. 80-05-007-010-20 The redemption period shall be Six (6) months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale. If this property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the Mortgage sale or to the Mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. WELLS FARGO BANK, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, AS TRUSTEE FOR FIRST FRANKLIN MORTGAGE LOAN TRUST, MORTGAGE LOAN ASSET-BACKED CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2005-FF6, Mortgagee/Assignee May 7, 2026 ROBERTSON, ANSCHUTZ, SCHNEID, CRANE & PARTNERS, PLLC Attorney for Mortgagee/Assignee 13010 Morris Road, Suite 450 Alpharetta, GA 30004 Telephone: 470-321-7112 Facsimile: 404-393-1425 Service Email: MIFCLTeam@raslg.com
(05-07)(05-28)

Public Notice:
Arlington Township Planning Commission
52022 34th Avenue, Bangor, MI 49013
269-427-7300
The Arlington Township Planning Commission will hear a request for a Special Use Permit for:
Waypoint Processing
54341 M-43 Hwy., Bangor, MI 49013
Parcel #80-03-008-013-40
Date: **June 17, 2026, at 6:00PM at the Township Hall.**
Persons in need of Special Accommodations should contact the Township Hall at least 4 days prior to the meeting.
Contact: Peggy Douglas, Planning Commission Chair,
office@arlingtontownship.com

PORTER TOWNSHIP - VAN BUREN COUNTY
RESOLUTION TO AMEND PORTER TOWNSHIP ZONING ORDINANCE SECTION 4.18 SIGNS AND OUTDOOR ADVERTISING STRUCTURES

At a regular Township Board meeting held on the 13th day of May, 2026, upon recommendation of the Porter Township Planning Commission, Motion by Nesbitt, second by Bitely to amend the Porter Township Zoning Ordinance, Section 4.18 Signs and outdoor advertising structures pursuant to the attached language.

Roll call vote:
Ayes: 5 Nays: 0 Absent: 0 Abstain: 0
Resolution declared passed.
Date: May 13, 2026

Heather Smith
Porter Township Clerk

Sec. 4.18. Signs and outdoor advertising structures.

A. *Statement of purpose.* The intent of this section is to regulate the type, number, physical dimensions, erection, placement and maintenance of signs in the Township. The purpose of the limitations, regulations, and standards established herein is to:
- Promote the public peace, health, and safety of residents and visitors;
- Protect the natural beauty and distinctive character of Porter Township;
- Protect commercial districts from visual chaos and clutter;
- - Provide an environment which fosters growth and development of business, while protecting and
- promoting the rural and agricultural nature of the Township;
- -Protect property values;
- -Eliminate distractions which are hazardous to motorists and pedestrians;
- -Protect the public's ability to identify establishments and premises;
- -Protect the public's interest in public buildings, streets, roads and highways and open spaces; and
- -Balance the individual rights of property owners to communicate their message with the public's right to
- be free of unreasonable distractions and aesthetic intrusions.

B. *Scope.* Except as otherwise expressly provided herein, this section shall not relate to building design. Nor shall the section regulate official traffic or government signs; the content of signs; scoreboards at athletic fields; gravestones; barber poles under three feet in height; religious symbols; commemorative plaques; the display of street numbers or names; or any display structure or construction not defined herein as a sign.

C. *General provisions.* It shall be unlawful for any person to erect, place, or establish a sign in Porter Township except in accordance with the provisions of this section.

D. *Definitions.* For the purpose of this section the following words or phrases are defined as follows:

Abandoned sign. A sign which no longer identifies or advertises a currently operating business, lessee, service, owner, product, or activity, and/or for which no legal owner can be found.

Advertising display area. The advertising display surface area (copy area) encompassed within any regular geometric figure which would enclose all or part of the sign. The structural supports for a sign, whether they be columns, pylons, or a building, or a part thereof, shall not be included in the advertising area.

Animated sign. A sign which uses movement or change of lighting to depict action or to create a special effect or scene. (Compare with "flashing sign".)

Awning. A shelter projecting from and supported by the exterior wall of a building constructed of nonrigid materials on a supporting framework. (Compare with "marquee".)

Awning/canopy sign. Letters, numerals or other drawings painted on, printed on, or attached flat against the surface of an awning/canopy.

Balloon sign. An air- or gas-filled sign, excluding 17-inch or smaller latex balloons where only one may be tied to an item with a display height not greater than five feet above that to which said balloon is attached which may not include utility or light poles.

Banner sign. A sign intended to be hung either with or without frames, possessing characters, letters, illustrations, or ornamentation applied to paper, plastic, or fabric of any kind. (Compare with "snipe sign".) Flags that do not contain any advertising copy shall not be considered banner signs for purposes of this section.

Bench sign. A sign located on any part of the surface of a bench or seat visible from an adjacent property or right-of-way.

Billboard. A sign which advertises an establishment, service, merchandise, use, entertainment, activity, product or message which is not conducted, sold, produced, manufactured or furnished upon the lot, building site or parcel where the sign is located.

Changeable copy sign. A sign upon which a display or message, other than display of the current time and/or temperature, can be changed not more than once a day by physical replacement or electronic change of the display or message.

Clearance (of a sign). The smallest vertical distance between the grade of the adjacent street or street curb and the lowest point of any sign, including framework and embellishments, extending over that grade.

Commercial center identification sign. A sign identifying or recognizing a commercial center.

Commercial sign. Any sign wording, logo, or other representation that, directly or indirectly, names, advertises, or calls attention to a business, product, service, or other commercial activity.

Construction sign. A sign which displays the name or names of principal contractors, architects and lending institutions and/or others responsible for the construction on the site where the sign is placed.

Copy. The wording on a sign surface in either permanent or removable letter form.

Development/building identification sign. A sign which identifies a development or building by its recognized name, not including a product or service.

Directional sign. A sign providing directions for vehicular or pedestrian circulation into, within or out of a development. Said sign shall not contain advertising display copy other than the names of on-site establishments and only for purposes of indicating direction thereto. Directional signs shall be located on the lot, building site or parcel where the sign(s) is located.

Directory sign. A sign which displays the names and locations of occupants or the use of a building.

Face of sign. The area of a sign on which the copy or display is placed.

Festoons. A string of ribbons, tinsel, flags, pennants or pinwheels.

Flag. Any fabric, banner, or bunting containing distinctive colors, patterns or symbols, used as a symbol of a government, political subdivision or other entity.

Flashing sign. A sign which contains an intermittent or sequential flashing light source used to attract attention. This does not include changeable copy signs, animated signs, as defined in this Section, or signs which through reflection or other means, create an illusion of flashing of intermittent light. (Compare with "animated sign" and "changeable copy sign".)

Freestanding sign. A sign structurally separated from a building,

Government sign. A public sign erected and maintained by Porter Township, the county, state, or federal government.

Ground-mounted sign. A sign which extends from the ground or that has a support placing the bottom thereof less than two feet from the ground. (Compare with "pole sign".)

Height (of a sign or flag pole). The vertical distance measured from the highest point of the sign or flag pole, including any decorative embellishments, to the grade of the adjacent street or the existing surface grade beneath the sign, whichever ground elevation is lower (less). (Compare with "clearance".)

Illuminated sign. A sign with an artificial light source incorporated internally or externally for the purpose of illuminating the sign.

Incidental sign. A sign, emblem, or decal Informing the public of the goods, facilities, or services available on the premises, whose purpose is secondary to the use of the lot, building site or parcel. No sign with a commercial message legible from a position off the lot, building site or parcel on which the sign is located shall be considered incidental.

Maintenance. The cleaning, painting, repair, or replacement of defective parts of a sign in a manner that does not alter the basic copy, design, or structure of the sign.

Mansard. A sloped roof or roof-like facade architecturally comparable to a building wall.

Marquee. A permanent roof-like structure or canopy of rigid materials supported by and extending from the facade of a building. (Compare with "awning".)

Marquee sign. A sign attached to or supported by a marquee structure.

Nameplate. A nonelectric on-premises sign giving only the name, address and/or occupation of an occupant or group of occupants.

Noncommercial sign. A sign not advertising an establishment, product, good or service. (Compare with "political sign".)

Off-premises sign. Another word for a billboard.

On-premises sign. A sign which pertains to the use of the premises on which it is located.

Painted wall sign. A sign which is applied with paint or similar substance on the face of a wall.

Parapet. The extension of a false front or wall above a roofline.

Pennant. Any lightweight plastic, fabric, or other material, whether or not containing a message of any kind, suspended from a rope, wire, or string, usually in series, designed to move in the wind.

Permanent sign. A sign which is permanently affixed on or in the ground or to a building and meets the requirements of a structure under the building code.

Pole sign. A sign with all parts of the display sign area at a height of eight feet or more, excluding the necessary supports, uprights or braces. (Compare with "ground-mounted sign".)

Political sign. A sign relating to a candidate for public office or a position on an issue. (Compare with "noncommercial sign".)

Portable sign. A reusable and movable sign not permanently affixed in the ground, or to a structure or building.

Real estate sign. A sign advertising the real estate upon which the sign is located for the purpose of offering the property for sale, lease or rent.

Roof sign. A sign erected or constructed wholly upon or over the roof of a building and supported on the roof structure.

Rotating sign. A sign in which the sign itself or any portion of the sign moves in a revolving or similar manner. Such motion does not refer to methods of changing copy.

Sign. A device, structure, painting, fixture, or placard using color, graphics, symbols, and/or written copy designed specifically for the purpose of advertising or identifying any event, establishment, product, good, service or displaying or depicting other information.

Sign area. The area shall be measured within a single, continuous perimeter composed of any straight line geometric figure which encloses the extreme limits of the advertising message, together with any frame or other material or color forming an integral part of the display, message, drawing or similar device, or used to differentiate same from the background against which it is placed, excluding the necessary supports, braces or uprights of the sign which combined areas per side may not exceed 30 percent of the permitted square footage of the sign.

For signs utilizing LED (light-emitting diode), up to 25 percent of the permitted sign area may be used for changeable copy or to electronically display the current time and/or temperature.

Where a sign has two or more faces, the area of all faces shall be included in determining the area of a sign, except that where two faces are placed back to back and are at no point more than two feet from one another, the area of the sign shall be deemed to be only the area of one face, or if faces are of different sizes, the area of the larger face.

Pole covers and other embellishments shall not be included in the area of measurement if they do not bear advertising copy or colors, patterns, logos that are a trademark or reasonably recognizable identification for the establishment and/or sign owner subject to the above provisions.

Snipe sign. A sign that is attached to a utility pole, tree, fence, or any object located or situated on public or private property. (Compare with "banner sign".) Flags that do not contain any advertising copy placed on light or utility poles shall not be considered snipe signs for purposes of this section.

Special event sign. A banner, portable sign, or balloon sign, not exceeding a height of 20 feet when fully inflated, depicting a special event, such as a grand opening, going-out-of-business sale, semiannual sale at a commercial establishment or a special event at a permitted nonresidential use in the residential zoning districts. Balloon signs shall be securely anchored to and placed directly upon the ground and fully inflated at all times.

Subdivision identification sign. A sign identifying or recognizing a platted subdivision, condominium complex, industrial, commercial, or residential development.

Under-canopy sign. A sign suspended beneath a canopy, ceiling, roof, or marquee.

Vehicle sign. A sign painted on, incorporated in, or attached directly to any mode of transportation, including but not limited to automobiles, trucks, boats, busses, airplanes, and trailers.

Wall sign. A sign including painted, individual letter, and cabinet signs, which are attached parallel to and extending not more than 15 inches from the wall of a building.

Window sign. A sign placed inside or upon a window facing the outside which is intended to be seen from the right-of-way or the outdoors.

E. *Signs prohibited.* The following types of signs are prohibited in all zoning districts:
1. Abandoned signs.
2. Balloon signs, except as expressly permitted by this section.
3. Animated signs.
4. Banner signs, except as expressly permitted by this Section.
5. Bench signs.
6. Festoons.
7. Pennants.
8. Portable signs, except as expressly permitted by this section.
9. Rotating signs.
10. Signs imitating or resembling official traffic or government signs or signals.
11. Snipe signs.
12. Vehicle signs not used during the normal course of business which are parked or located for the primary purpose of displaying the advertising copy.
13. (Roof signs.
14. Special event signs, except as expressly permitted by this section.
15. Marijuana provisioning centers cannot represent the marijuana leaf or any paraphernalia on the exterior of the building and/or any outdoor signage.

F. *Signs permitted in all zoning districts.* The following signs are allowed in all zones:
1. Incidental signs.
2. One construction sign for each public street frontage of a construction project, not to exceed 32 square feet in sign area. Such signs may be erected 30 days prior to beginning of construction and shall be removed 30 days following issuance of the final certificate of occupancy for the premises.
3. One nonilluminated real estate sign per lot, building site or parcel, not to exceed six square feet in sign area. On a lot, building site or parcel which is not agriculturally or residentially zoned, a real estate sign may not exceed a sign area of 16 square feet. In addition, one directional sign located in the general vicinity of the lot, building site or parcel; directing the public to the lot, building site, or parcel for sale as long as permission from the land owner has been given. In no event shall either sign be located on the road, highway or street right-of way.
4. Noncommercial signs not to exceed 16 square feet in sign area. Noncommercial signs may be placed only on private property and only with the permission of the property owner.
5. Political signs may be placed only on private property and only with the permission of the property owner. Signs relating to an election or referendum shall be removed five days following such election or referendum.
6. Banners, seasonal and decorative in nature and theme that do not advertise a product, service or business and which pertain to holidays and/or community-wide or governmental events.

G. *Agricultural and residential land uses.* In all agricultural and residential uses, the requirements of schedule A shall govern the use, area, type, height and number [of signs], in addition to the requirements elsewhere in this ordinance.

SCHEDULE A - AGRICULTURE AND RESIDENTIAL LAND USES

Use	Sign Type	Maximum Display Area	Maximum Hight	Sign Purpose	Maximum No. of Signs
Education, religious, cemeteries, public buildings, public parks and other non residential uses in a agricultural or residential district (other than offices)	a) Ground sign	30 s.f.	5 feet	Identification	1 per principal use
	OR				
	Wall sign	30 s.f	20 feet		
	b) Directional sign	2 s.f.	3 feet	Directional	1 per curb cut
Residential subdivisions, including mobile home parks and apartments	a) Ground sign	30 s.f. (see footnote 1)	5 feet	Identification and/or informational	1 per street entrance, not to exceed one per 2,600 lineal feet of continuous road frontage;
	b) Directional	2 s.f.	3 feet	Directional	2 per development
Home occupations, day care and foster care uses in a residence		None			None
Off- premises signs prohibited		None			None
Where allowed, sign face may be used in conjunction with a wall, fence or other architectural entrance feature.					

H. *Agricultural and residential uses; additional permitted items.* All Agricultural and Residential uses shall also be permitted the following:
1. Flags.
2. One special event sign, not to exceed 32 square feet, shall be permitted for up to seven calendar days per year per lot, building site or parcel. A sign permit must be obtained prior to displaying a special event sign.

I. *Commercial and office land uses.* In all commercial and office uses the requirements of Schedule B shall govern sign use, area, type, height and numbers in addition to requirements elsewhere in this ordinance.

SCHEDULE B - COMMERCIAL AND OFFICE LAND USES

Use	Sign Type	Maximum Display Area	Maximum Hight	Sign Purpose	Maximum No. of Signs
Individual commercial establishments, including hotels without restaurants (not located within a multi-establishment center)	a) Wall Sign	1 s.f. for each foot in length or hight (whichever is greater) of the wall to which it is affixed (see footnote 1)	25 feet	Business or Identification	4 per building (see footnote 3)
	b) Pole Sign	60 s.f.	20 feet		1 pole or ground mounted sign (see footnote 2)
	OR				
	Ground Sign	80 s.f.	10 feet		
	c) Window signs and Displays	25% of total window surface for temporary and 15% for permanent			
Multitenant commercial and/or professional center including hotels with restaurants.	a) Pole sign,	80 s.f.	20 feet	Commercial center and/ or individual tenant identification	1 pole or 1 ground sign (see footnote 2)
	OR				
	Ground sign	80 s.f.	10 feet		
	b) Wall sign,	80 s.f.	25 feet	Identification or Commercial center	1 per building wall not to exceed 4 per building
	OR				
	Canopy/ Awning	32 s.f.	12 feet		
Commercial tenants within a multi-tenant development (also see below)	a) Wall sign	1 s.f. per lineal foot of tenant space width not to exceed a sign length of more than 2/3 the subject tenant space width.	12 feet	Business or Identification	1 per exterior wall of the tenant premises, maximum of 2 (must be located upon premises of tenant).
	b) Nameplate	6 s.f.	Underside of building overhang	Identification	1 per tenant
	c) Window signs and displays	25% of total window surface for temporary and 15% for permanent>			
	Individual pole and ground-mounted signs prohibited.				
Auto service stations	a) Pole sign	60 s.f.	20 feet	Identification	1 pole or ground sign (see footnote 2)
	OR				
	Ground sign	80 s.f.	10 feet		
	b) Wall sign	1 s.f. for each foot in length or hight (whichever is greater) of the wall to which it is affixed (see footnote 1)	25 feet	Business or Identification	4 per building (see footnote 3)
	c) Window signs and displays	25% of total window surface for temporary and 15% for permanent			
Automobile sales	a) Pole sign	60 s.f.	20 feet	Identification	1 pole or 1 ground sign for new car dealership, and 1 pole or 1 ground sign for used car sales
	OR				
	Ground sign	80 s.f.	10 feet		
	b) Wall sign	1 s.f. for each foot in length or hight (whichever is greater) of the wall to which it is affixed (see footnote 1)	25 feet	Identification	4 per building (see footnote 3)
	c) Window signs and displays	25% of total window surface for temporary and 15% for permanent			
Building within an office complex (as defined below)	a) Wall sign	25 s.f.	20 feet	Identification for offices within building	1 per tenant
	OR				
	Wall sign	50 s.f.	20 feet	Identification	1 per building
	b) Ground sign	40 s.f.	5 feet		1 per building at site of building
	Pole signs prohibited				
Buildings containing one or more offices which are under separate business management and not located within an office complex (as defined below)	a) Wall sign	25 s.f.	20 feet	Identification for individual offices within building	1 per tenant
	OR				
	Wall sign	50 s.f.	20 feet		1 per building
	b) Ground sign	60 s.f.	8 feet	Identification	1 per building
	Pole signs prohibited				
Office complex (lot, parcel or building sites containing 2 or more office buildings)	Ground sign	60 s.f.	8 feet	Identification of complex and/or individual buildings therein	1 sign per street entrance not to exceed more that one (1) per 2,600 lineal feet of continuous road frontage along the same public street.
Off-premises signs prohibited, including billboard signs		None			None

J. *Commercial and office uses; additional permitted items.* All Commercial and Office uses shall also be permitted the following:

1. Flags. A lot, building site or parcel shall be limited to three flags. For lots, building sites and parcels with public street frontage in excess of 200 feet, three additional flags are permitted for every additional 200 feet of continuous public street frontage. Flag pole height may not exceed 60 feet. Maximum flag size shall be 15 feet x 25 feet.
2. One directory wall sign per building, not to exceed 20 square feet in total sign area.
3. One special event sign, not to exceed 32 square feet except as expressly permitted herein, shall be permitted for up to 14 calendar days per year per lot, building site or parcel. A sign permit must be obtained prior to displaying a special event sign.
4. Directional signs up to two square feet in area and four feet in height. Each lot, building site, parcel, commercial center, or development shall not have more than one directional sign per street entrance.

K. *Industrial land uses.* In all industrial uses the requirements of schedule C shall govern sign use, area, type, height and numbers in addition to requirements elsewhere in this ordinance.

SCHEDULE A - AGRICULTURE AND RESIDENTIAL LAND USES

Use	Sign Type	Maximum Display Area	Maximum Hight	Sign Purpose	Maximum No. of Signs
Individual industrial buildings outside an industrial park or industrial-office development (as described below)	a) Wall sign	25 s.f.	20 feet	Individual tenant identification	1 per tenant space
	OR				
	Wall Sign	50 s.f.	20 feet	Building Identification	1 per building
	b) Ground sign	60 s.f.	8 feet	identification of building and/or individual tenants	1 per building
Individual buildings within an industrial park or industrial-office development (as described below)	a) Wall sign	25 s.f.	20 feet	Individual tenant identification	1 per tenant space
	OR				
	Wall sign	50 s.f.	20 feet	Building identification	1 per building
	b) Ground sign	40 s.f.	5 feet	Building or tenant identification	1 per building
Industrial parks and industrial-office developments	Ground sign	60 s.f.	8 feet	Identification of industrial park	1 sign per street entrance not to exceed more than one (1) per 2,600 lineal feet of continuous road frontage along the same public street.

L. *Industrial uses; additional permitted items.* All industrial uses shall also be permitted the following:

a. Flags. A lot, building site or parcel shall be limited to three flags. For lots, building sites and parcels with public street frontage in excess of 200 feet, three additional flags are permitted for every additional 200 feet of continuous public street frontage. Flag pole height may not exceed 60 feet. Maximum flag size shall be 15 feet x 25 feet.
b. One directory wall sign per building, not to exceed 20 square feet in total sign area.
c. One special event sign, not to exceed 32 square feet, except as expressly permitted herein, shall be permitted for up to seven calendar days per year per lot, building site or parcel. A Sign Permit must be obtained prior to displaying a special event sign.
d. Directional signs up to two square feet in area and a height of four feet. Each lot, building site, parcel, or development shall not have more than one directional sign per street entrance.

M. *Permits required and conditions.* Unless otherwise provided by this section, all signs shall require permits and payment of fees. No sign shall be installed or utilized until and unless a permit has been issued by the township. No permit is required for the maintenance of a sign. A permit issued pursuant to this section becomes null and void if work is not commenced within 180 days of issuance. If work authorized by the permit is suspended or abandoned for more than 180 days, the permit must be renewed with an additional payment of one-half the original fee.

N. *Signs not requiring permits.* The following types of signs are exempted from permit requirements but must be in conformance with all other requirements of this section:

1. Construction signs of six square feet or less.
2. On-premises directional signs of two square feet or less.
3. Noncommercial signs, including political signs.
4. Seasonal decorations.
5. Government signs or notices, or any sign relating to an emergency.
6. Real estate signs of six square feet or less.
7. Incidental signs, provided such signs do not occupy more than six (6) square feet of advertising display area.
8. Flags.

O. *Maintenance.* All signs, flags, and flag poles shall be properly maintained. Exposed surfaces shall be clean and painted, if paint is required. Defective or damaged parts shall be removed or replaced. Signs not properly maintained shall be considered blight and dealt with as such.

P. *Lighting.* Unless otherwise specified by this section, all signs may be illuminated.

1. No sign regulated by this Section may utilize:
   a. An exposed incandescent lamp *with an external reflector and without a screen or comparable diffusion device.
   b. Any exposed incandescent lamp * in excess of 160 watts unless a screen or shield is installed so that no light rays are emitted by the installed fixture beyond the advertising display area.
   c. Any revolving beacon light.
   d. Lights that could be confused with or construed as traffic control devices.
   e. Direct or reflected light that could create a traffic hazard to operators of motor vehicles.

(For the purpose of this section, quartz lamps shall not be considered an incandescent light source.)*

2. Metal halide lighting, fluorescent lighting and quartz lighting may be used for outdoor advertising signs but shall be installed in enclosed luminaries.
3. Glass tubes filled with neon, argon or krypton may be used provided they do not flash intermittently or create a visual effect of movement.
4. Lighting fixtures used to illuminate an outdoor advertising sign shall be mounted on the top of the sign structure whenever practical or mounted so that no light rays are emitted by the installed fixture at angles above the sign's highest horizontal plane or in any event beyond the advertising display area.
5. No sign may be illuminated by flashing, rotating, oscillating or intermittent lighting.
6. Signs with an electronical displays can change not more than once every four seconds.
7. Signs utilizing LED displays may not be so bright as to be objectionable or inappropriate for the surroundings.

Q. *Required sign setbacks for all zoning districts.* Required sign setbacks for all signs and structures supporting said sign shall be as follows:

1. No sign shall be placed in a location where it causes a hazard to vehicular or pedestrian traffic by depriving the driver or pedestrian of a clear and unobstructed view of approaching, intersecting or merging traffic. No sign may be located within the public right-of-way.
2. Development/building identification signs and subdivision Identification signs may be placed in boulevard median strips if approved by the Van Buren County Road Commission and/or the township as part of an approved site plan.
3. All signs shall be set back a minimum of ten feet from any public right-of-way line and ten feet or the height of the sign, whichever is greater, from all other property lines, except as follows.
   a. Directional signs may be located adjacent to a lot line.
   b. Subdivision identification signs shall be located a minimum of 25 feet from the pavement of the adjacent roadway(s) and in any event, no closer than five feet to any lot line(s).
   c. Subdivision Identification signs, in agricultural and residential zoning districts, may be located at the front property line, outside the right-of-way and in any event, no closer than five feet to any other property line(s).

R. *Sign height and overhang.*

1. Wall sign height shall be measured from the first-floor elevation of the building.
2. A wall sign shall not extend beyond the window sills of the floor above or the top of the wall to which it is attached.
3. A wall sign shall not project beyond the ends of the wall to which it is attached.
4. Walls signs may be affixed flat against the wall of a building or may project therefrom not more than 15 inches. Signs projecting over a walkway or path shall be at least 11 feet above the finished grade.
5. A sign shall not project into the public right-of-way of any adjacent street.

S. *Landscaping.* The base treatment for a freestanding sign shall be landscaped and maintained. Such landscaping may be placed in stone, masonry or treated wood bases, containers or in the ground to achieve a pleasant aesthetic arrangement.

T. *Deviations.* In obtaining a permit, the applicant may apply to the township for a deviation from certain requirements of this section. A deviation may be granted by the zoning board of appeals where the literal application of the section would create a hardship for the sign user and the following criteria are met:

1. The granting of the requested deviation would not be materially detrimental to the property owners in the vicinity.
2. The hardship created by a literal interpretation of the section is due to conditions unique to that lot, building site or parcel and does not apply generally to other properties in the township.
3. The granting of the deviation would not be contrary to the general purposes of this section or set an adverse precedent.

In granting a deviation, the zoning board of appeals may attach additional requirements necessary to carry out the spirit and purpose of this Section in the public interest,

U. *Resubmission of application for a deviation request.*

1. No application for a deviation from the provisions of this section shall be submitted to the township or be formally considered by the township where such application has been previously denied or turned down by the township unless the township determines that either one year has passed since the prior application was denied or the new application or project is substantially changed from the prior one. In determining whether substantial changes have occurred, the Zoning board of appeals shall consider:
   a. Whether the application has been substantially modified from the earlier one;
   b. Whether external conditions or circumstances have changed significantly so as to warrant a reconsideration of the application;
   c. Whether new and material evidence has been discovered which would justify a reconsideration of the application or project and the failure to present such evidence at the first consideration was not the fault of the applicant.

NOTICE TO WAVERLY TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS

Waverly Township will sponsor a Two Day Clean-up for the residents of Waverly Township.

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY
JUNE 5 & 6 , 2026
FROM 8:00 A.M. TO 4:00 P.M. BOTH DAYS
WAVERLY TOWNSHIP HALL 42114 M-43

Attendants will be on duty to check ID'S
You must have identification to prove you are a Waverly Township Resident

THERE WILL BE A TIRE TRAILER AVAILABLE
Will be accepting small and medium size Tractor Tires
WE WILL NOT ACCEPT:
Cement, Chemicals or Hazardous Materials, no dead animals, loose trash, shingles, medical waste, insulation or paint (unless the paint is completely dry and the lid off)

Waverly Township
Tony Millek, Supervisor
269-657-1776

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

VAN BUREN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT
PROPOSED 2026-2027 BUDGET

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on **June 3, 2026, at 3:30 p.m.,** at the VanBuren Conference Center, 490 South Paw Paw Street, Lawrence, Michigan, the Board of Education of Van Buren Intermediate School District will hold a public hearing to consider the District's proposed 2026-2027 budget.

The Board may not adopt its proposed 2026-2027 budget until after the public hearing. A copy of the proposed 2026-2027 budget, including the proposed property tax millage rate, is available for public inspection during normal business hours at the Superintendent's Office, Van Buren Conference Center, 490 South Paw Paw Street, Lawrence, Michigan.

The property tax millage rate proposed to be levied to support the proposed budget will be a subject of this hearing.

This notice is given by order of the Board of Education.

John Faul, Board Secretary
Van Buren Intermediate School District

Mattawan Consolidated School
Notice of a Public Hearing on Proposed 2026-2027 Budget
Van Buren and Kalamazoo Counties, Michigan

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on June 8, 2026 at 7:00am at the Central Administration Office Board Room, 56720 Murray St, Mattawan Michigan 49071, the Board of Education of Mattawan Consolidated School will hold a public hearing to consider the District's proposed 2026-2027 general fund budget.

The Board may not adopt its proposed 2026-2027 budget until after a public hearing. A copy of the proposed 2026-2027 budget, including the proposed property tax millage rate, is available for public inspection during normal business hours at the Central Administration Office of the Mattawan Consolidated School, 56720 Murray St, Mattawan Michigan 49071 (or by emailing pstermer@mattawanschools.org).

The property tax millage rate proposed to be levied to support the proposed budget will be a subject of this hearing.

This notice is given by order of the Board of Education.

Vickie Mabin Herzberg
Secretary, Board of Education

PORTER TOWNSHIP, VAN BUREN COUNTY NOTICE OF HEARING TO RENEW TOWNSHIP-WIDE SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT

FOR FIRE PROTECTION

The Porter Township Board, having previously established a township-wide Special Assessment District for the cost of fire motor vehicles, apparatus, equipment, housing and fire protection, **HEREBY sets a public hearing for Wednesday, June 10, 2026, at 6:15 p.m. at the Porter Township Hall, 88040 M-40 Highway, Lawton, Michigan.**

The Porter Township Board will be in session to discuss and hear comments which may be offered regarding the re-affirmation of the township-wide special assessment in the amount of 1.5 mil (one and one-half mil), for the cost and expenses of the fire motor vehicles, apparatus, equipment, housing and fire protection. The nature of the improvement to be made is such that a periodic redetermination of cost and renewal of the levy shall be made on an annual basis.

The Township will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services to those with disabilities planning to attend upon adequate notice to Heather Smith, Porter Township Clerk, in writing, or by calling the Township Hall at (269) 624-4022.

Dated: May 13, 2026
Heather Smith, Clerk, Porter Township

PORTER TOWNSHIP, VAN BUREN COUNTY, MICHIGAN NOTICE OF HEARING TO CONTINUE THE SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT FOR THE ERADICATION OR CONTROL OF AQUATIC WEEDS AND PLANTS FOR BANKSON LAKE

At its regular Board meeting on May 13, 2026, the Porter Township Board voted to proceed to carry out an improvement as provided in MCL 41.723(3)(1), and to continue the Special Assessment District already established for the eradication or control of aquatic weeds and plants for Bankson Lake. The plans and cost estimates are on file with the Township Clerk for public examination.

It is anticipated the total costs for treatment will be approximately the same as the previous treatments, and the charge will be $170/per unit per year for five years (2027-2031 inclusive).

A Hearing will be held on **June 10, 2026, at 6:45** p.m., at the Porter Township Hall, 88040 M-40, Lawton, Michigan.

If you are opposed to this assessment, a Petition signed by twenty percent (20%) or more of property owners protesting the continuation of the district or the assessment must be filed with the Township Board at or before the first hearing. Should the Board proceed with the special assessment, and you are opposed to the amount, you must appear and protest at the second public hearing to confirm the special assessment roll in order to appeal the amount of the special assessment to the Michigan Tax Tribunal.

Dated: May 13, 2026
Heather Smith, Clerk, Porter Township

PORTER TOWNSHIP, VAN BUREN COUNTY NOTICE OF HEARING TO REAFFIRM THE TOWNSHIP-WIDE SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT

FOR THE COST OF CONSTRUCTION, IMPROVEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF PUBLIC ROADS LOCATED IN THE TOWNSHIP

The Porter Township Board, having previously established a township-wide Special Assessment District for the cost of construction, improvement, and maintenance of public roads located in the township, **HEREBY sets a public hearing for Wednesday, June 10, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. at the Porter Township Hall, 88040 M-40 Highway, Lawton, Michigan.**

The Porter Township Board will be in session to discuss and hear comments which may be offered regarding the re-affirmation of the township-wide special assessment in the amount of 1.0 mil (one mil), for the construction, improvement and maintenance of public roads located in the township. The nature of the improvement to be made is such that a periodic redetermination of cost and renewal of the levy shall be made on an annual basis.

The Township will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services to those with disabilities planning to attend upon adequate notice to Heather Smith, Porter Township Clerk, in writing, or by calling the Township Hall at (269) 624-4022.

Dated: May 13,2026
Heather Smith, Clerk, Porter Township

PORTER TOWNSHIP VAN BUREN COUNTY, MICHIGAN

CARGO, SHIPPING AND/OR STORAGE CONTAINER USAGE ORDINANCE ORDINANCE 2026-1

An ordinance to define and regulate cargo, shipping and/or storage type containers and/or portable or temporary storage containers within the Township of Porter, Van Buren County Michigan and to provide penalties for violation thereof.
The Township of Porter Ordains:

Section 1. Accessory Use or Structure:
For purposes of this ordinance; cargo containers, railroad cars, trucks, vans, converted mobile homes, trailers, recreational vehicles, bus bodies, vehicles, portable pods and similar prefabricated items and structures originally built for purposes other than primary use as a dedicated accessory storage structure are not permitted as an accessory building or structure on the same lot with existing principle use building or structures.

Section 2. Definitions:
2.1. Cargo/ Shipping/ Storage Container: Any metal or primarily metal container designed or constructed to ship, store, or handle bulk goods or items, or which appears substantially similar to such containers in appearance; originally, a standardized reusable vessel that was designed for and used in the parking, shipping, movement, transportation or storage of freight, articles of goods or commodities; generally capable of being mounted on or moved on a rail car, loaded on a ship.
2.2. Portable or Temporary Storage Container: A portable or moveable, weather-resistant receptacle designed and used for storage or shipment of household goods, wares, valuables or merchandise (typically known as PODS, MODS, etc.), and which is leased on a short-term basis for temporary storage purposes.

Section 3. Cargo/ Storage/ Shipping Containers Restricted Districts:
Cargo, storage and shipping containers are not allowed to be used on lots under two (2) acres or any lake residential lot.

Section 4. Cargo /Storage/ Shipping Containers Permitted Use:
Cargo, storage and shipping containers are only permitted for use in all business, industrial, and agricultural zoned districts with lot sizes two (2) acres or more and must abide by the restrictions set down in Section 5,

Section 5. Cargo /Storage/ Shipping Containers For Permanent Storage:
When allowed by zoning, cargo, storage and shipping containers may be permanently placed on the property if all applicable building regulations are followed and the property owner obtains site plan approval from the Township Zoning Administrator. The following regulations shall apply:

1. Cargo, storage and shipping containers shall not be used for any advertising purpose and shall be kept clean of all alpha-numeric signage and writing.
2. Cargo, storage and shipping containers shall be painted in solid colors that would blend into the surrounding area. It shall be the responsibility of the owner to promptly remove any writing or graffiti that may be placed or exist on the container.
3. A solid foundation of road base material, gravel or better is required for permanent storage use.
4. No motor vehicles are allowed to be used as permanent storage containers.
5. Cargo, storage and shipping containers shall meet all setback requirements as found in Appendix B of the Ordinance Book.
6. Cargo, storage and shipping containers shall not be stacked above the height of a single container device.
7. No electricity, plumbing or utility of any kind shall be installed, run to or connected to any container device,
8. Cargo, storage and shipping containers shall be placed in the rear area of the property unless screened so as to not be visible from the street and finished in a manner which minimizes its visibility from overhead views from buildings and elevated thoroughfare sections.
9. Cargo, storage and shipping containers shall not be used to store hazardous materials, as defined by the Michigan Fire Code.
10. Cargo, storage and shipping containers shall not occupy required off-street parking, fire lanes, loading/unloading or landscaping areas.
11. No cargo, storage and shipping containers shall be placed in a location which may cause hazardous conditions, constitute a threat to public safety or create a condition detrimental to the surrounding land use and development.
12. No cargo, storage and shipping containers shall be used as any sort of living quarters or hunting blinds.
13. No structural modifications shall be made to cargo, storage and shipping containers.
14. No livestock or pets shall be housed or stored in cargo, storage and shipping containers.

Section 6. Cargo, Storage and Shipping Containers For Temporary Use:
Property owners will be required to obtain a temporary Zoning Permit from the Zoning Administrator. A fee for the temporary Zoning Permit will be set by the Township Board.
No cargo, storage and shipping containers for temporary storage shall be kept on the premises for longer than three (3) months, upon approval. This period may be extended for an additional three (3) months annually. The following regulations shall also apply:

1. Cargo, storage and shipping containers shall meet all setback requirements as found in Appendix B of the Ordinance Book.
2. Cargo, storage and shipping containers shall not be stacked above the height of a single container device.
3. No electricity, plumbing or utility of any kind shall be installed, run to or connected to any container device.
4. Cargo, storage and shipping containers shall not be used to store hazardous materials, as defined by the Michigan Fire Code.
5. Cargo, storage and shipping containers shall not occupy required off-street parking, fire lanes, loading/unloading or landscaping areas.
6. No cargo, storage and shipping containers shall be placed in a location which may cause hazardous conditions, constitute a threat to public safety or create a condition detrimental to the surrounding land use and development.
7. No cargo, storage and shipping containers shall not be used as any sort of living quarters hunting blinds.
8. Cargo, storage and shipping containers associated with an approved building construction project shall be permitted to remain on-site no more one hundred and eighty (180) days.
9. No structural modifications shall be made to cargo, storage and shipping containers.
10. No livestock or pets shall be housed or stored in cargo, storage and shipping containers.

Section 7. Violation and Penalty:
The penalty for violation of this ordinance shall be set by the Township Board. Any cargo, storage and/or shipping container in violation of this ordinance must be removed within fifteen (15) days of notice. If not removed, the Township will remove the container at property owners' expense.

Section 8. Effective Date:
This ordinance becomes effective thirty (30) days after newspaper publication. Adopted by the Porter Township Board: May 13, 2026

Heather Smith, Clerk, Porter Township

2025 Water Quality Report for the Village of Paw Paw

Water Supply Serial Number: MI0005210 Completed 5-01-2026 BH/DN EGLE Review 5-13-2026

This report covers the drinking water quality for the Village of Paw Paw for the **2025** calendar year. This information is a snapshot of the quality of the water that we provided to you in **2025.** Included are details about where your water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and state standards.

Your water comes from three groundwater wells, each over 110, 160, and 178 feet deep. The State performed an assessment of our source water to determine the susceptibility or the relative potential of contamination. The susceptibility rating is on a seven- tiered scale from "very-low" to "very-high" based on geologic sensitivity, well construction, water chemistry and contamination sources. The susceptibility of our source is moderately low for wells #6 & #8, and moderately high for back-up well #4.

There are no significant sources of contamination in our water supply. We are making efforts to protect our sources by participating in the State of Michigan Wellhead Protection Program and following the EGLE annual drinking water monitoring schedule.

If you would like to know more about the report, please contact Tim Brandys, Department of Public Services Director, 110 Harry L. Bush Blvd, Paw Paw, Michigan, 49079, phone number 269-657-3169. Copies are available at the Paw Paw Village Hall. The report is also posted on the Village's Website, www.pawpaw.net (click on the left hand menu item titled Public Services and then click on the item titled "Consumer Confidence Report **2025**). This report is not being mailed to all water customers.

Contaminants and their presence in water: Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the U.S. EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

Vulnerability of sub-populations: Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune systems disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. U.S. EPA/Center for Disease Control guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

Sources of drinking water: The sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. Our water comes from wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally-occurring minerals and, in some cases, radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity.

Contaminants that may be present in source water include:

- **Microbial contaminants**, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations and wildlife.
- **Inorganic contaminants,** such as salts and metals, which can be naturally-occurring or result from urban storm water runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining or farming.
- **Pesticides and herbicides,** which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture and residential uses.
- **Radioactive contaminants,** contaminants, which can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.
- **Organic chemical contaminants,** including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban storm water runoff, and septic systems.

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the U.S. EPA prescribes regulations that limit the levels of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. Federal Food and Drug Administration regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which provide the same protection for public health.

Water Quality Data

The table below lists all the drinking water contaminants that we detected during the **2025** calendar year. The presence of these contaminants in the water does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. Unless otherwise noted, the data presented in this table is from testing done January 1, **2025**, through December 31, **2025**. The State allows us to monitor for certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants are not expected to vary significantly from year to year. All the data is representative of the water quality, but some are more than one year old.

Terms and abbreviations used below:

- **Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG):** The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.
- **Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL):** The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.
- **Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL):** The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.
- **Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG):** The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.
- **Treatment Technique (TT):** A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.
- **N/A:** Not applicable
- **ND:** not detectable at testing limit
- **ppm:** parts per million or milligrams per liter
- **ppb:** parts per billion or micrograms per liter
- **ppt:** parts per trillion or nanograms per liter
- **pCi/l:** picocuries per liter (a measure of radioactivity)
- **Action Level (AL):** The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements that a water system must follow.
- **Level 1 Assessment:** A study of the water supply to identify potential problems and determine (if possible) why total coliform bacteria have been found in our water system.
- **Level 2 Assessment:** A very detailed study of the water system to identify potential problems and determine (if possible) why an E. coli MCL violation has occurred and/or why total coliform bacteria have been found in our water system on multiple occasions.

[1]Monitoring Data for Regulated Contaminants

Regulated Contaminant	MCL, TT, or MRDL	MCLG or MRDLG	Level Detected	Range	Year Sampled	Violation Yes/No	Typical Source of Contaminant
Arsenic (ppb)	10	0	4.7	4.7-4.7	2025	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Runoff from orchards; Runoff from glass and electronics production wastes
Barium (ppm)	2	2	0.340	0..340-0..340	2025	No	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge of metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits
Nitrate (ppm)	10	10	ND	N/A	2025	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride (ppm)	4	4	ND	N/A	2025	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive which promotes strong teeth; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Sodium[1] (ppm)	N/A	N/A	18.5	18-19	2025	No	Erosion of natural deposits
TTHM Total Trihalomethanes (ppb)	80	N/A	17	17-17	2025	No	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection
HAA5 Haloacetic Acids (ppb)	60	N/A	5.34	5.34-5.34	2025	No	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection
Chlorine[2] (ppm)	4	4	0.53	0.36-0.98	2025	No	Water additive used to control microbes
Alpha emitters (pCi/L)	15	0	1.3	0-1.3	2014	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Combined radium (pCi/L)	5	0	0.578	0.458-.578	2020	No	Erosion of natural deposits
E. coli in the distribution system (positive samples)	See E. coli note	0	N/A	N/A	2025	No	Human and animal fecal waste
Fecal Indicator – E. coli at the source (positive samples)	TT	0	N/A	N/A	2024	No	Human and animal fecal waste

[1] Sodium is not a regulated contaminant. [2] The chlorine "Level Detected" was calculated using a running annual average. [3] E.Coli MCL violation occurs if (1) routine and repeat samples are total coliform-positive and either is E.coli-positive or(2) the supply fails to take all required repeat samples following E. coli-positive routine sample, or (3) the supply fails to analyze total coliform-positive repeat sample for E. coli.

[1] E. coli MCL violation occurs if: (1) routine and repeat samples are total coliform-positive and either is E. coli-positive, or (2) the supply fails to take all required repeat samples following

[2] The chlorine "Level Detected" was calculated using a running annual average.

[3] E. coli MCL violation occurs if: (1) routine and repeat samples are total coliform-positive and either is E. coli-positive, or (2) the supply fails to take all required repeat samples following E. coli-positive routine sample, or (3) the supply fails to analyze total coliform-positive repeat sample for E. coli.

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)							
Regulated Contaminant	**MCL, TT, or MRDL**	**MCLG or MRDLG**	**Level Detected**	**Range**	**Year Sampled**	**Violation Yes/No**	**Typical Source of Contaminant**
Hexafluoropropylene oxide dimer acid (HFPO-DA) (ppt)	370	N/A	ND	N/A	2025	No	Discharge and waste from industrial facilities utilizing the Gen X chemical process
Perfluorobutane sulfonic acid (PFBS) (ppt)	420	N/A	ND	N/A	2025	No	Discharge and waste from industrial facilities; Stain-resistant treatments
Perfluorohexane sulfonic acid (PFHxS) (ppt)	51	N/A	ND	N/A	2025	No	Firefighting foam; Discharge and waste from industrial facilities
Perfluorohexanoic acid (PFHxA) (ppt)	400,000	N/A	ND	N/A	2025	No	Firefighting foam; Discharge and waste from industrial facilities
Perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA) (ppt)	6	N/A	ND	N/A	2025	No	Discharge and waste from industrial facilities; Breakdown of precursor compounds
Perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) (ppt)	16	N/A	ND	N/A	2025	No	Firefighting foam; Discharge from electroplating facilities; Discharge and waste from industrial facilities
Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) (ppt)	8	N/A	ND	N/A	2025	No	Discharge and waste from industrial facilities; Stain-resistant treatments
Inorganic Contaminant Subject to Action Levels (AL)	**Action Level**	**MCLG**	**Your Water**	**Range of Results**	**Year Sampled**	**Number of Samples Above AL**	**Typical Source of Contaminant**
Lead (ppb)	12	0	1	0-10	2025	0	Lead service lines, corrosion of household plumbing including fittings and fixtures; Erosion of natural deposits
Copper (ppm)	1.3	1.3	.2	0-0.6	2025	0	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits

[4] Ninety (90) percent of the samples collected were at or below the level reported for our water.

Information about lead: *Lead can cause serious health effects in people of all ages, especially pregnant people, infants (both formula-fed and breastfed), and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and parts used in service lines and in home plumbing. The Village of Paw Paw is responsible for providing high quality drinking water and removing lead pipes but cannot control the variety of materials used in the plumbing in your home. Because lead levels may vary over time, lead exposure is possible even when your tap sampling results do not detect lead at one point in time. You can help protect yourself and your family by identifying and removing lead materials within your home plumbing and taking steps to reduce your family's risk. Using a filter, certified by an American National Standards Institute accredited certifier to reduce lead, is effective in reducing lead exposures. Follow the instructions provided with the filter to ensure the filter is used properly. Use only cold water for drinking, cooking, and making baby formula. Boiling water does not remove lead from water. Before using tap water for drinking, cooking, or making baby formula, flush your pipes for several minutes. You can do this by running your tap, taking a shower, doing laundry or a load of dishes. If you have a lead service line or galvanized requiring replacement service line, you may need to flush your pipes for at least 5 minutes to flush water from both your home plumbing and the lead service line. If you are concerned about lead in your water and wish to have your water tested, contact the Village of Paw Paw Department of Public Services Director, Tim Brandys (269-657-3169) for available resources. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available at https://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead.*

Our water supply has an unknown number of lead service lines at this time. Two hundred thirty two service lines of are of unknown material out of a total of 1,146 service lines. In **2025**, 12 services were investigated and replaced. This makes a total of 531 serviced lines replaced and 298 confirmed to be non-lead, thereby not requiring replacement. The village has replaced approximately 72% of service lines to date. This year and following years the Village has an aggressive program to continue service line investigation and replacement.

Monitoring and Reporting to the Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) Requirements: The State and EPA require us to test our water on a regular basis to ensure its safety. We met all of the monitoring and reporting requirements for **2025.**

We will update this report annually and will keep you informed of any problems that may occur throughout the year, as they happen. Copies are available at the Paw Paw Village Hall. The report is also posted on the Village's Website, www.pawpaw.net (click on the left hand menu item titled Public Services and then click on the item titled "Consumer Confidence Report **2025**). This report is not being mailed to all water customers.

We invite public participation in decisions that affect drinking water quality. You may contact the Village of Paw Paw Council, which meets the second and fourth Monday of every month at 7:00 p.m. at the Paw Paw District Library, 609 West Michigan, Paw Paw, Michigan. For more information about your water, or the contents of this report, contact Tim Brandys, Department of Public Services Director, 110 Harry L. Bush Blvd, Paw Paw, Michigan, 49079, phone number 269-657-3169. For more information about safe drinking water, visit the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency at http://www.epa.gov/safewater.

Correction on the 2024 Consumer Confidence Report. The 2024 Consumer Confidence Report reported the 90 Th percentile for copper as .01 Parts per million. The correct 90 th percentile for copper for the 2024 Consumer Confidence Report should have been reported as 0.1 parts per million.

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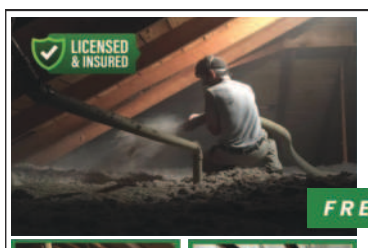

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